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# Bella

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Blasted over careless Diana insult

**Bride for 48hrs**
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this morning

EXCLUSIVE

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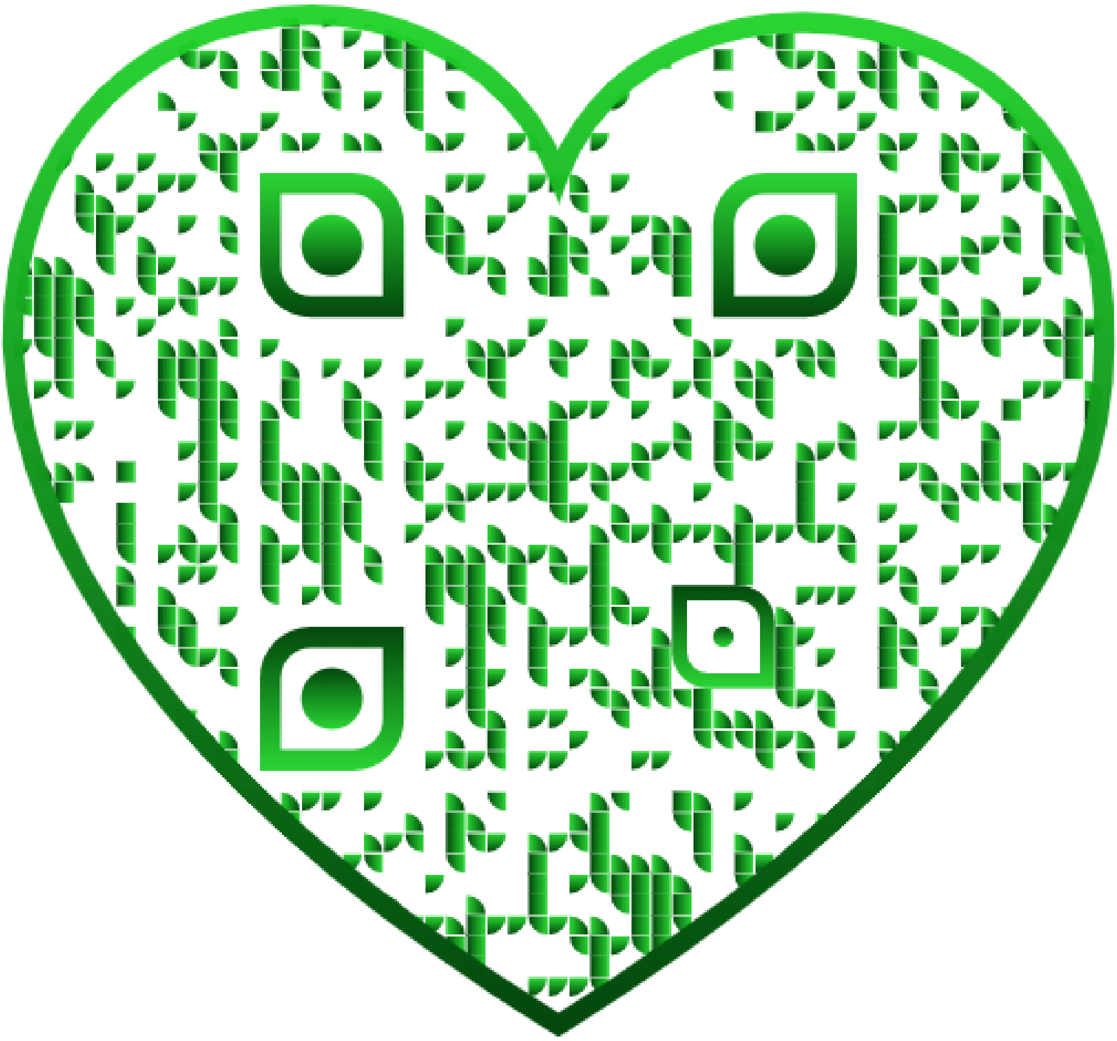
**RUTH & JAMES CHAT**
'We fight... we get on each other's nerves!'



# Bella MONTHLY

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Royal Special

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# this week in bella

Mirror
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THE PRIDE of BRITAIN AWARDS

## MAKING US PROUD

### Carol Vorderman is on hand to celebrate Britain's unsung heroes

The country is gearing up to once again celebrate the *Pride of Britain Awards,* hosted by Carol Vorderman, 64, and Diversity's Ashley Banjo, 36.

The awards, which celebrate everyday people who have shown courage and bravery, are attended by our favourite famous faces and even royalty – with King Charles giving out a gong in 2012. Each year, the public has the chance to nominate unsung heroes in their communities. 'I think there were around 100,000 nominations this year', Carol says. 'It was quite colossal and made judging difficult but it just shows with all the turbulence in the world, people recognise goodness even more.'

Carol, who has hosted the show since its inception in 1999, shares how much of impact the event has had on her. 'If someone is inspirational, they inspire you to actively behave in a different way. All of our winners are like that. I get a great energy from them and think, "No, you've got to fight, Carol, you've got to do this." They have a huge influence on my life', she says.

Last year's winners included eight-year-old Florrie Bark, who spreads her infectious positivity and raises money for other children while battling a rare form of leukaemia.

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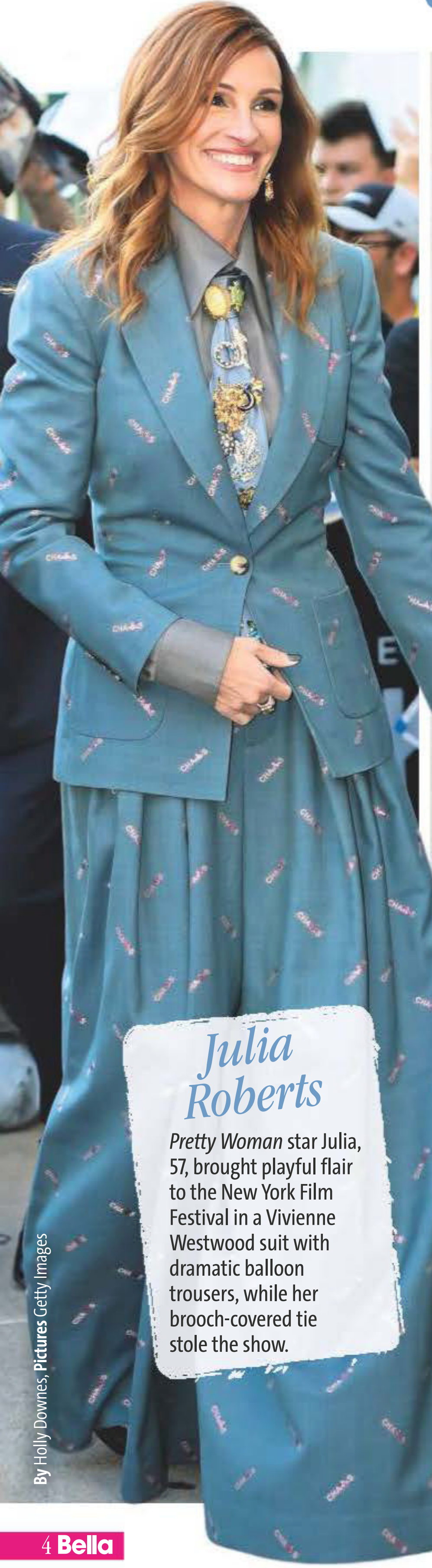
**By** Afia Kufuor **Pictures** WireImage **Cover pictures:** Getty, Shutterstock

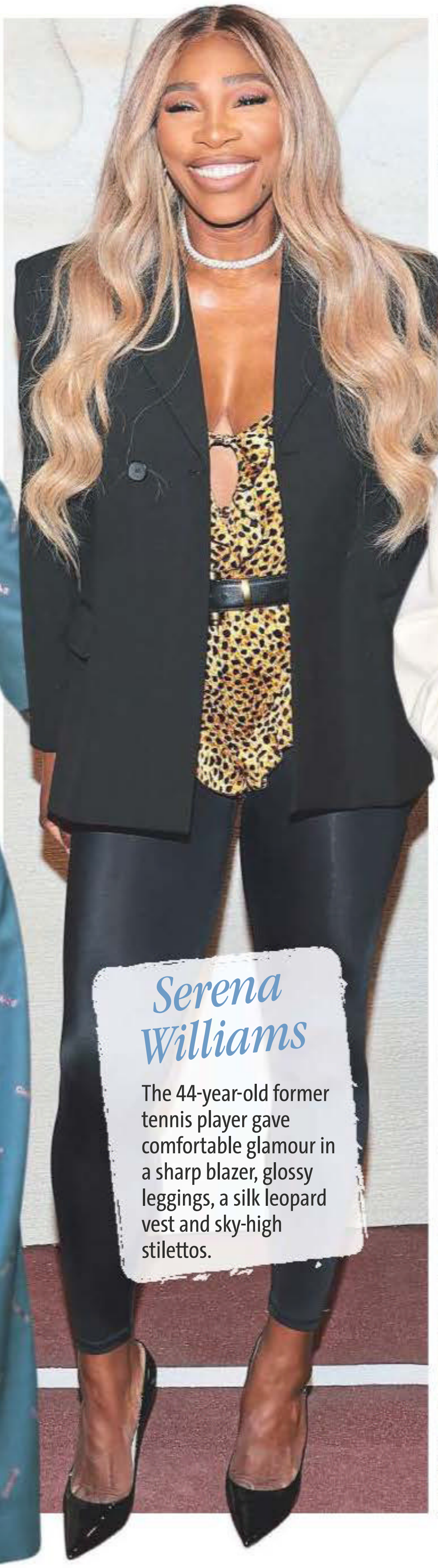
# Suit your

By Holly Downes, Pictures Getty Images



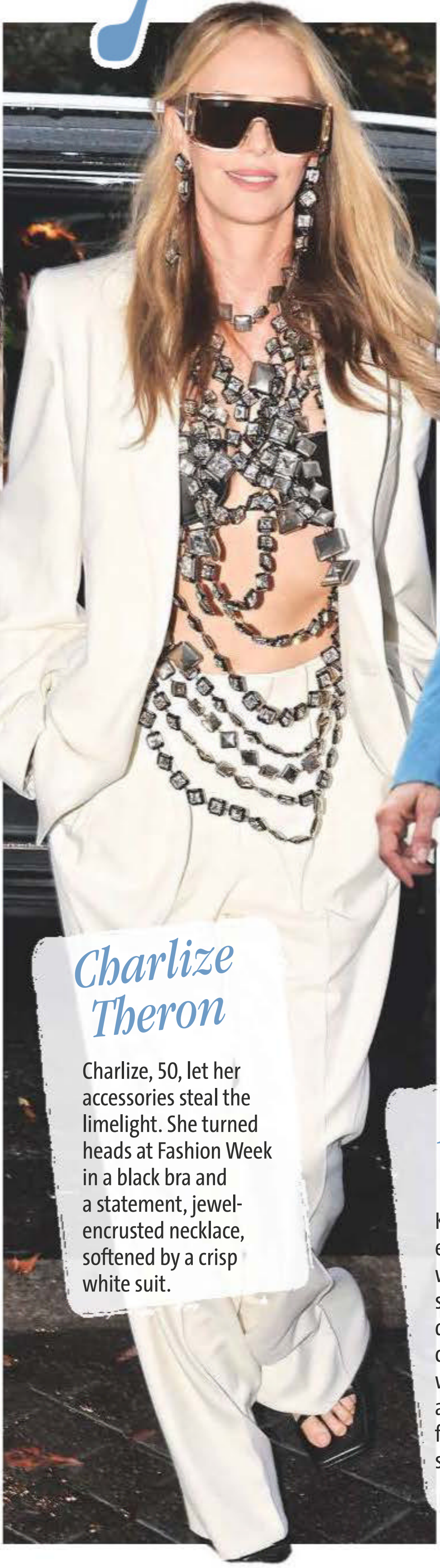
### Julia Roberts

*Pretty Woman* star Julia, 57, brought playful flair to the New York Film Festival in a Vivienne Westwood suit with dramatic balloon trousers, while her brooch-covered tie stole the show.



### Serena Williams

The 44-year-old former tennis player gave comfortable glamour in a sharp blazer, glossy leggings, a silk leopard vest and sky-high stilettos.



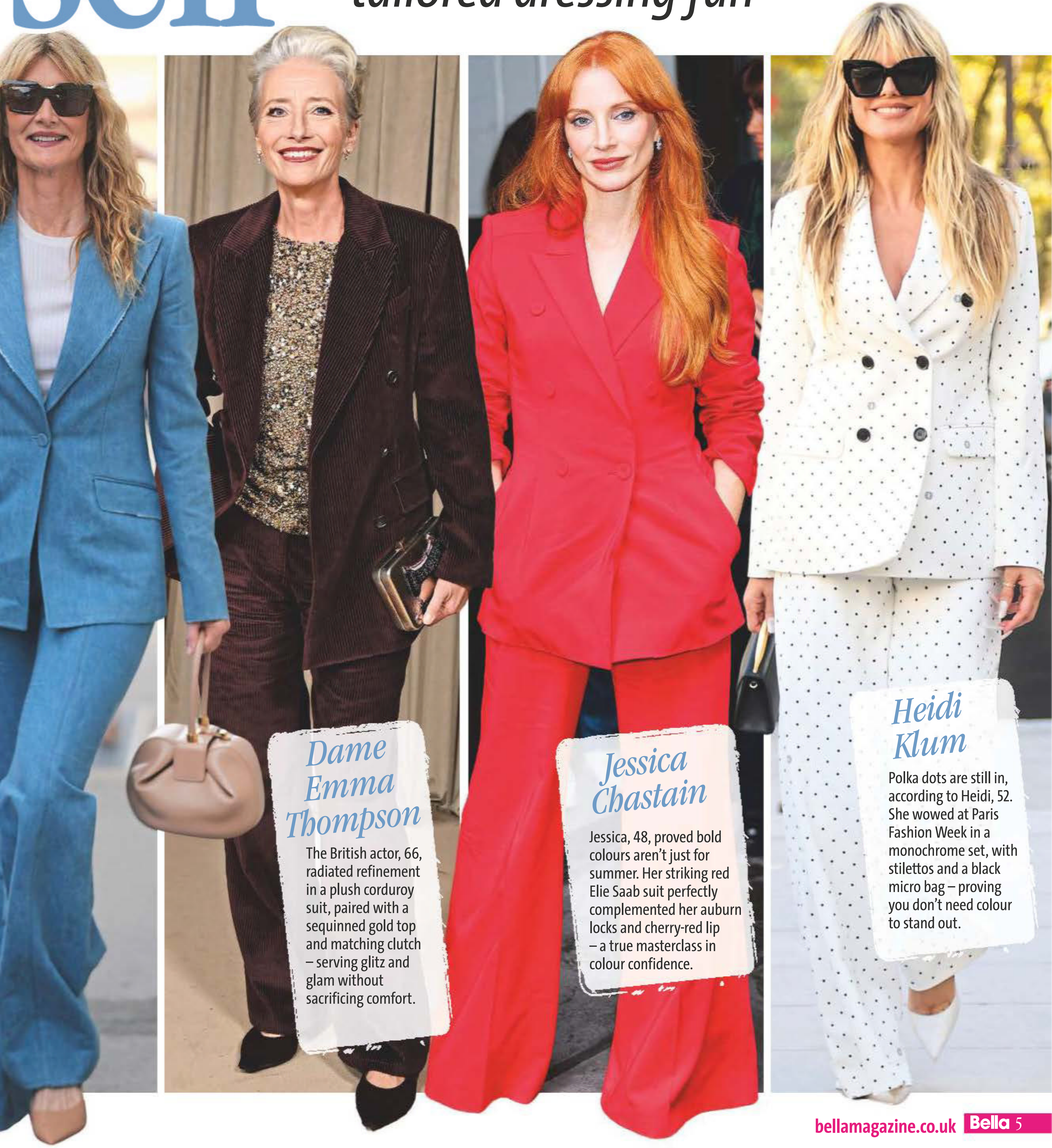
### Charlize Theron

Charlize, 50, let her accessories steal the limelight. She turned heads at Fashion Week in a black bra and a statement, jewel-encrusted necklace, softened by a crisp white suit.

### Laura Dern

Keeping things effortlessly chic was Laura, 58, who stepped out in a light denim co-ord. She completed the look with a tan grab bag and pointed heels for a relaxed but sophisticated finish.

# These celebs are making tailored dressing fun



## Dame Emma Thompson

The British actor, 66, radiated refinement in a plush corduroy suit, paired with a sequinned gold top and matching clutch – serving glitz and glam without sacrificing comfort.

## Jessica Chastain

Jessica, 48, proved bold colours aren't just for summer. Her striking red Elie Saab suit perfectly complemented her auburn locks and cherry-red lip – a true masterclass in colour confidence.

## Heidi Klum

Polka dots are still in, according to Heidi, 52. She wowed at Paris Fashion Week in a monochrome set, with stilettos and a black micro bag – proving you don't need colour to stand out.

Controversy over the Duchess of Sussex's 'insensitive' actions in Paris

# MEGHAN CAUSES UPROAR WITH DIANA 'INSULT'

Hours after being lauded for her surprise appearance at Paris Fashion Week, Meghan Markle found herself on the receiving end of backlash for posting an 'insensitive' video. The Duchess of Sussex sparked controversy after she shared a clip of herself travelling in a limo, with her feet up, close to the Paris tunnel where her late mother-in-law, Princess Diana, died in a car crash while being pursued by paparazzi. Critics accused Meghan of being 'bewilderingly tasteless'. One royal fan commented, 'A new low even for her. Horrible.' As another claimed it was an 'insult' towards her husband Harry.

Meghan, 44, made the solo trip across the pond to attend the Balenciaga show in support of her designer friend Pierpaolo Piccioli. Her visit marked her debut at PFW and her first visit to Europe since the 2023 Invictus Games in Germany. The duchess, in an all-white custom-made outfit by the fashion house, shared a video montage of her visit on Instagram, writing, 'About last night. Thank you Pierpaolo Piccioli and Balenciaga. I've missed you [France] – thanks for the love.' Her spokesperson added, 'Over the years, the duchess has worn a number of designs by Pierpaolo. This evening reflects the culmination of many years of artistry and friendship, reflected in her support for his new creative chapter.'

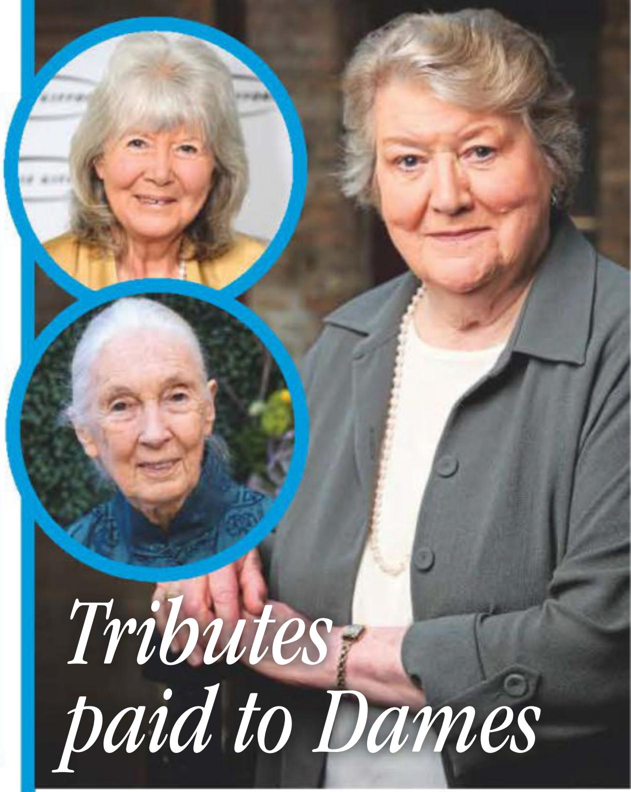
Meghan mingled with *Vogue* boss Anna Wintour, actor Anne Hathaway, director Baz Luhrmann and her friend Markus Anderson at the Balenciaga show and after-party. But things quickly turned sour for Meghan as she was driven back to the Hotel Plaza Athenee. Clearly in a relaxed mood, the duchess put her feet up during the journey around the French capital, which travelled along the River Seine and drove past bridges Pont Alexandre III, Pont des Invalides and the Pont d'Alma, by the tunnel where Diana, Dodi Fayed and driver Henri Paul died in August 1997.

Royal expert Richard Fitzwilliams called her actions 'insensitive beyond belief', saying, 'To share a video which had any connections with the tragic death of the Princess of Wales defies belief. I'm sure she didn't mean to cause offence, she can't have been thinking, but it's insensitive. She couldn't possibly have intended to be disrespectful.' He added, 'Diana's death is a tragedy that has scarred so much of Harry's life and I can't imagine he would find this very appropriate.' Royal fans also criticised Meghan's careless actions. 'For most people whose husband's mother died, passing the area where it happened would be a moment of quiet, respectful contemplation,' one online commenter noted. Another said, 'Utterly thoughtless. Poor Harry,' while others called her 'out of touch' and 'clueless'.

Harry, 41, has been open about the trauma he's been through since his mother's death. 'I can safely say that losing my mum at the age of 12 and therefore shutting down all of my emotions for the last 20 years, had a quite serious effect not only on my personal life, but also my work as well. I have probably been very close to a complete breakdown on numerous occasions,' he said.

# COLEEN BETRAYED BY SISTER

Coleen Nolan has opened up about the time her late sister Bernie caused a 'shocking and hurtful' betrayal, by having an affair with one of her beaus. The former singer, 60, revealed that the siblings shared a similar taste in men and would fight over the same guy. 'I was seeing somebody, living with him for two years and then my sister ended up being with him,' she said. 'I was deciding at the time that I didn't want to be with the guy but it was still shocking and hurtful.' Luckily, the love triangle didn't cause a rift between the sisters. 'We never fell out because I thought he wasn't worth losing my sister over,' she added.



# Tributes paid to Dames

The world has been saddened by the deaths of Dames Patricia Routledge, Jilly Cooper and Jane Goodall. Actor Patricia, who was 96, was best known for playing Hyacinth Bucket in sitcom *Keeping Up Appearances*, while author Jilly, 88, wrote 'bonkbuster' books *Rivals* and *Riders*. Queen Camilla paid tribute to her 'wonderfully witty' friend Jilly. 'May her hereafter be filled with impossibly handsome men and devoted dogs.' she said. Emily Atack, who stars in the TV adaptation of *Rivals* added, 'I cannot begin to explain how much we will miss you.' Meanwhile, Prince Harry led tributes to primatologist Jane, 91, saying, 'She showered love and care to those who were privileged to know her.'

# Loose Women bloodbath continues

By Shereen Low, **Pictures** Getty, Alamy, Instagram, Shutterstock

*Loose Women* is said to be 'in turmoil' following the backstage feuds and vicious job cuts, with long-time editor Sally Shelford being the latest to be axed. 'The show is in bits. Things are a nightmare. There is even talk about how long *Loose Women* will be with us for,' an insider said. Alongside the 220 planned job cuts, tense rows between some of the show's long-running stars are threatening its future. It has been reported that Olivia Attwood, 34, walking the red carpet at last month's NTAs alone and not with her fellow panellists rubbed some up the wrong way. 'They think that she is all about promoting herself… and she gets special treatment,' the source added.

# WEEK IN PICS

## Motherly love

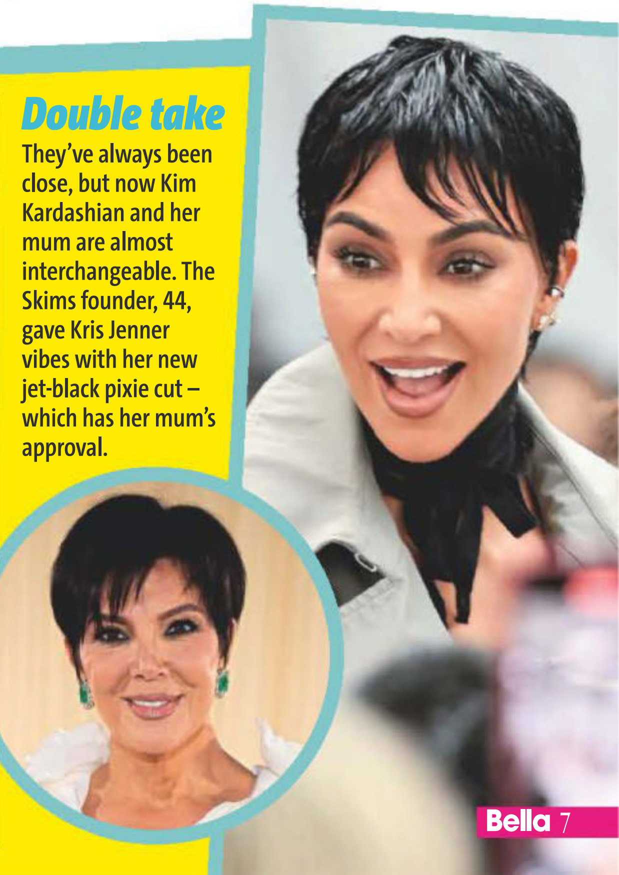
Charlotte Church, 39, made a red-carpet appearance with her rarely-seen son Dexter at the BAFTA Cymru Awards. The teen, 16, is the spitting image of his dad and Charlotte's ex-husband, former rugby star Gavin Henson.

## Seeing red

Pamela Anderson has swapped her striking blonde locks for a chic copper-red bob. The former *Baywatch* star, 58, flaunted her new 'do at Paris Fashion Week. 'I'm just having fun and playing with it,' she said.

## Double take

They've always been close, but now Kim Kardashian and her mum are almost interchangeable. The Skims founder, 44, gave Kris Jenner vibes with her new jet-black pixie cut – which has her mum's approval.



Exclusive

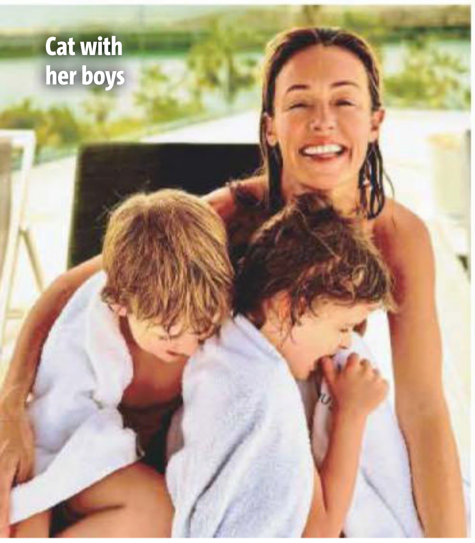
# Holly's big comebac as Cat CONSIDERS QUITTING

## ITV's former golden girl could be returning to our screens, sources tell *Bella*

She returned to the sofa in early 2024

*This Morning* won an NTA last month

Since Cat Deeley and Ben Shephard took over hosting duties last year, *This Morning* has gone from strength to strength, culminating in a National Television Awards win last month. However, insiders have told *Bella* that Cat is thinking of quitting the show once her contract is up in the spring. Surprisingly, one of the names being considered to take over is Holly Willoughby – who Cat replaced after she sensationally stepped down from hosting the ITV daytime show in October 2023, after 14 years on the sofa.



Cat with her boys

News of Cat's potential exit has thrown *This Morning* into fresh turmoil, more than a year after she was brought in as the network's saviour. While she has steadied the ship following Holly's departure, insiders say the star has privately admitted that the demands of the role have become too much, given the recent news of her break-up with husband Patrick Kielty.

'Cat has been a total pro since stepping into the job. She's warm, professional, and the viewers like her,' the source says. 'But she's been going through a lot personally since splitting from Patrick, and it's taken a toll. Work has kept her going, but she's realised she needs a break.'

> 'Cat has been a total pro'

The 47-year-old presenter – who shares sons Milo, nine, and James, seven, with Patrick – announced her marriage split in July. While she is all smiles for the cameras, friends say the pressure of live TV alongside personal upheaval has left her exhausted.

'*This Morning* is a full-time commitment. It's not just the hours on screen – it's the prep, the meetings, the appearances,' says our source, adding that Cat's considering 'stepping back, focusing on her boys, and exploring projects that aren't as demanding.' The insider reveals that Cat is even thinking about looking for work in LA – where she became a household name on *So You Think You Can Dance*. But with Patrick based in the UK and both parents committed to co-parenting, moving the children across the Atlantic isn't on the cards. 'She loves LA and still has so many contacts there,' says the source. 'But she knows her sons need stability, and she won't take them away from Patrick. For now, she's focused on carving out a new balance here in Britain.'

Cat's departure would leave ITV execs scrambling to find a new anchor for the show. The network has been desperate to secure the right formula in the wake of Holly and Phillip Schofield's separate exits in 2023, and Ben and Cat have been popular with viewers.

But *Bella* learns that bosses

Phil and Holly used to be close

Holly and Dan have been spending more time together

have been having secret talks about who would take over should Cat walk – and they haven't ruled out a shock comeback for Holly, 44. 'Bringing her back, even part-time, would be huge for the show. It all depends on whether Holly feels ready,' the source says. However, the insider says the mum-of-three – who is married to TV producer Dan Baldwin – is conflicted over a potential return and would only agree on her terms. She resigned from the show in the aftermath of a plot to kidnap, rape and murder her, for which Gavin Plumb has been sentenced to life in prison.

Her departure came after a strained year, in which she fell out with her former best friend and co-presenter Phil, following the backlash from 'Queuegate' – where the pair were accused of jumping the line to see the late Queen lie in state at Westminster Hall in September 2022. Towards their last few months on screen together, Holly and Phil, 63, appeared strained before he quit in May 2023 after admitting to an 'unwise but not illegal' affair with a much younger male colleague.

> 'It will be on Holly's terms'

'Holly is daytime royalty. Audiences trust her. She's warm, glamorous and relatable. Her return would be huge – it's exactly what the show needs,' the source says. 'Holly leaving felt like the end of an era, but she's still the face most viewers associate with *This Morning*. If she ever came back, it would be the ultimate reset. She can be choosy. If Holly goes back, it will be on her terms. She'd been on that sofa for 14 years. Holly was drained and needed breathing space.'

But after her break, we hear she's started thinking about making a shock return to TV. 'She's enjoying her time away, but she hasn't shut the door" she loves television, she loves connecting with viewers.'

While Holly's been loving doing the school runs and spending time with husband Dan and their kids Harry, 16, Belle, 14, and Chester, 11, she doesn't have any TV work lined up for the first time in her career after her shows *Dancing On Ice* and *Bear Hunt* were cancelled, and she chose to step down from hosting the *You Bet!* reboot with Stephen Mulhern.

Our insider adds, 'Holly doesn't have to take what's offered. If ITV want her back, they'll need to let her call the shots.'

**By** Nathan Kay and Shereen Low, **Pictures** Alamy, Getty, Instagram, Shutterstock

The pair have been friends for 25 years

# ‘Our frie today th

## Ruth Jones and James Corden open up about their bond, a new project, and of course, *Gavin & Stacey*

They are the mastermind duo behind one of the country’s most-beloved sitcoms, *Gavin & Stacey*, in which they each play the idiosyncratic Nessa Jenkins and Neil ‘Smithy’ Smith.

And *Bella* was fortunate enough to secure stall seats at Ruth Jones and James Corden’s London Palladium matinee talk for their brand-new book, *When Gavin Met Stacey And Everything In Between*, last week. The pair, visibly awestruck as they were met with rapturous applause by the 2286-strong audience, discussed everything, from the show’s success to their unbreakable bond and working dynamic.

James, 47 – who first met Ruth, 59, in 2000 when they starred on *Fat Friends* – reminisced about of their connection, saying, ‘Ruth and I have both said that however proud we are of *Gavin & Stacey*, alongside that is just this magical, unique friendship which has grown, and is definitely deeper now today than it’s probably ever been. That’s a really unique thing in an industry like this, to maintain that love for each other.’

> ‘That’s a unique thing’

Ruth emotionally added of her co-star and writer, ‘James is one of my best friends – it’s a very brother and sister sort of relationship. We do fight – he really gets on my nerves, and I really get on his.

‘But there have been times in my life where James is the only person I could turn to and has completely saved me. His friendship is massively valuable to me.’

*Gavin & Stacey* spanned an incredible 17 years. The first

At the London Palladium last week

# ndship is deeper an it's ever been'

As Smithy and Nessa

With their *Gavin & Stacey* co-star Alison Steadman (bottom right) on *Fat Friends*

three series ran between 2007 and 2010, a highly-anticipated Christmas special came nine years later, before fans rejoiced last December as Nessa and Smithy – the best friends of the title hero and heroine, Gavin (Mathew Horne) and Stacey (Joanna Page) Shipman – finally got together. While it was James who originally had the lightbulb moment for the comedy while telling Ruth about his real-life experience with a mate called Gavin, it was the Welsh actor whom he credits for its existence.

He remembered fondly, 'At that time, we were both perhaps feeling slightly unvalued as actors. And I remember Ruth saying, "James, you should absolutely write this." She was so adamant. She was like, "We're going to do it on Thursday – I'll bring my laptop and we'll ride it out." Without that, it would have been one of those things that you think is a good idea that you never really act upon.'

James admitted that when series three of *Gavin & Stacey* wrapped, it was the most 'emotionally lost' he's ever felt. But in 2015, he relocated to America for his sparkly hosting gig on *The Late Late Show*, while Ruth stayed this side of the pond, pouring her energy into novel writing and starring in and co-writing Sky One drama *Stella*.

Before reuniting to write the 2019 *Gavin & Stacey* special, Ruth revealed that they 'kept the characters alive' with one another, but James credits his wife Julia Carey – with whom he shares Max, 14, Carey, 10, and Charlotte, seven – for their particularly special reunion in 2018, which sparked the question: could there be more *Gavin & Stacey*?

'We hadn't really seen each other, not for any bad reason, just that James was living somewhere else,' Ruth remembered. 'Julia very kindly invited me and my husband to Mexico for James's surprise 40th, and I was really gobsmacked.'

'Ruth came in, and I just lost my s**t because I couldn't believe that she'd made the trip,' James continued. 'Then we proceeded to have maybe one of the best weekends of our lives. There was a little band playing and Ruth went over and said, "Do you know *Wild Thing*?" She got on the stage and sang it like her life depended on it. It was so good. She left the stage and Harry Styles said to her, "How did you do that?"'

> 'How did you do that?'

Ruth then proceeded to spoil the London Palladium with a brief re-enactment.

The actor announced in June that she and husband David Peets had separated 18 months prior, after tying the knot in 1999. It's been through what she calls her 'domestic reconfiguration' that she unravelled memorabilia for the *Gavin & Stacey* book.

'I've had to sort out my attic and I'm so glad I did, because we probably wouldn't have had any content. It makes you aware of how quickly time goes by,' she said. Thankfully, their new tome is not where their collaboration ends, as they are currently working on an Apple TV+ project.

James explained that they'll be writing episode two in New York. 'We are trying to just sit with the characters and wait for them to tell us where the show is going. We remain with the rituals and the environment that we've always been in – Post-it notes, some pens, a laptop, a nap, and chocolate.'

● *When Gavin Met Stacey and Everything in Between is out now*

By Millie Payne, **Pictures** Getty Images, BBC/Toffee International Ltd./Tom Jackson, Alamy, Shutterstock

Alongside Mathew and Joanna on *Gavin & Stacey*

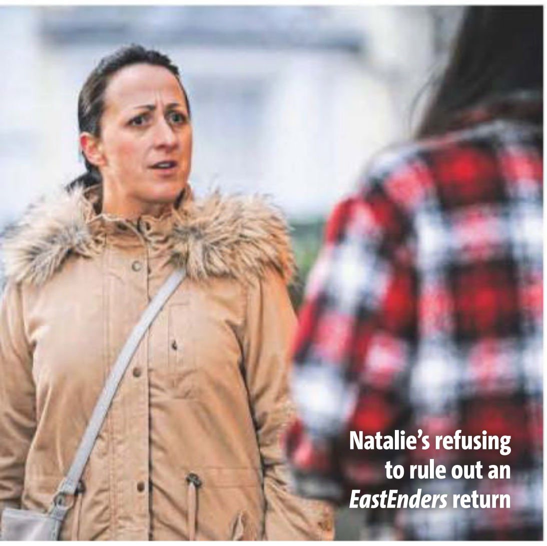
Exclusive

# ‘My daughter’s not keen on having a famous mum’

## As Natalie Cassidy puts pen to paper for her autobiography, the former *EastEnders* star talks about the trials and tribulations she’s faced over the years

With fiancé Marc and daughters Eliza and Joanie

As *EastEnders* legend Sonia Fowler, Natalie Cassidy has been through the mill in the three decades she was an inhabitant of Albert Square. She gave birth at 15 to her daughter, Bex, embarked on a lesbian affair, and was wrongly accused of killing the wife of her murderous boyfriend, Reiss, before giving birth to his baby daughter, Julia, amid the rubble of the Queen Vic moments after the building collapsed and killed him during the 40th anniversary episode.



Natalie’s refusing to rule out an *EastEnders* return

In her new autobiography, *Happy Days*, the 42-year-old charts the unexpected turn her life took when, aged 10, she was spotted at drama school and propelled to fame on the BBC soap, which she departed in April.

Here, Natalie – who shares daughter Joanie, nine, with fiancé Marc Humphreys, and is also mum to Eliza, 15, from a previous relationship – tells *Bella* about the highs and lows of her life in the spotlight…

> ‘We laugh all the time’

**Is this really the end for Sonia in *EastEnders*?**

Well, never say never. I had an eight-year break and then came back for another 12 years. They’ve now been kind enough to say the door remains open. At the moment, I’m just enjoying the freedom of being able to plan a bit more.

**Did you take anything from the set before you left?**

Only my trumpet. I didn’t want any of her clothes. Once I’d left, I dyed my hair red and had my eyebrows micro-bladed, so I’ll never have to use a pencil again.

**How have you dealt with hardships in your life?**

I wasn’t always wise when it came to choosing friends, and I started drinking too much. I remember a picture of me in the papers on one occasion, Barbara Windsor told me, ‘It’s alright to be photographed coming out of a club, young lady. But not falling out.’

**You also had a volatile relationship in your 20s...**

The only good thing to come out of

She won *Cooking With The Stars*

it was my elder daughter, Eliza. Put simply, the relationship was wrong. I was lonely after my mum died and I didn't always make the right decisions.

**Do you regret your weight-loss DVD?**

I was paid £100,000 – that's £50,000 after tax – and I thought it would be a good way to get fit. I lost four stone in three months, too much too soon. It sold 250,000 copies in the first week but then I put all the weight back on and had to deal with nasty comments. I've normally got skin like an elephant, but some of the remarks did hurt me. I started taking laxatives to try and lose some of the weight. I wasn't being kind to my body.

**What is your relationship with weight like now?**

Gradually, I started eating sensibly and taking regular exercise. For the last eight or nine years, I've been around the 10-stone mark. And I'm happy with that.

**Tell us about your soulmate Marc...**

We're friends and we laugh all the time. When he's off working, I miss him. We like being together. He's made me find who I am, the real me.

**Are you planning to get married soon?**

We met 10 years ago this month and Marc is turning 40, so this would have been the perfect time. But I'm too busy publicising the book. It'll happen sooner or later. Marc's the one I want to grow old with.

**Would you be open to more children?**

People keep asking, probably because my mum had me late [Natalie's mum Evelyn was 44 when she gave birth to her]. But I've got two healthy girls and, to be honest, I'm looking forward to when Marc and I can have some time on our own, the honeymoon period we've never had.

> 'I'm too busy to get married'

**Are you dealing with teenage tantrums?**

No, we went through all that when Eliza was 12 or 13. Horrendous, but she's come out the other side. I think she's quite proud of me now.

**Is Joanie proud too?**

She's not as keen on having a famous mum. If we're out and about and someone recognises me and wants a selfie, she gets a bit grumpy. But it's part of the job. I've never understood actors being rude to the public.

Nat's happier than ever with Marc

**Where would you like to be 10 years from now?**

I'd love to be cooking in my kitchen after a four-week holiday in Italy having already learned to speak Italian. I'd like a regular role in a sitcom, and I hope I'd still be doing my podcast, *Life with Nat*. Oh, and, if the right people are reading this, I'd love to be on *Celebrity Traitors*. Please!

- *Happy Days by Natalie Cassidy (HQ, £20) is out now*

By Richard Barber, **Pictures** Shutterstock, Instagram/Natalie Cassidy, BBC, ITV

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Photography: David Venni / Chilli Media

TV star Spencer Matthews admitted he won't be passing his reported £12.5 million fortune to his three children, who he shares with wife Vogue Williams, arguing that it would be doing them a 'huge disservice'. *So, we ask…*

# Should you leave inheritance money to your children?

## No

### 'Inheritance holds people back'

**Eimear O'Hagan, 43, writer**

I jokingly refer to my nine- and seven-year-old sons as 'financial vampires', because, as is the case for most parents, the majority of my money is spent on them.

When you have children, you implicitly agree to provide for them until they're independent, and we don't begrudge a penny we spend on raising our boys and giving them the best childhood we can afford. However, once they can stand on their own two feet and provide for themselves, our money will be ours once again and we plan to damn well enjoy it.

Long holidays, a house extension we can't afford right now and as luxe a retirement as possible are all on the list, and to finance it we'll be spending everything we have, leaving nothing for the boys when we're gone.

By then, we'll have more than done our bit financially for them – why should we restrict ourselves in our later lives to leave them yet more in the form of an inheritance?

My husband and I were both supported by our families until we joined the working world, then we were on our own financially. That's how it should be. I want them to make their own way in the world, face challenges and overcome them – including financial ones – not be propped up by the bank of mum and dad after we're gone.

I believe inheritance holds people back. Sorry boys but I plan to spend every penny before I die, and you'll be better men as a result!

## Yes

### 'I want them to have a nest egg'

**Mel Fallowfield, 52, writer**

Just because Spencer Matthews wasn't the most sensible in his early years, it doesn't mean his children have to follow in his footsteps. He could teach them the value of money and guide them on how to make it work, not just for them but setting up charities to help others. It isn't money that's dangerous; what's dangerous is bringing up entitled children who haven't got a clue and don't realise how lucky they are.

In a world that's increasingly hard, why wouldn't you help your children?

Rent is eye watering, meaning many young people haven't got a hope of saving up for a deposit to buy their own home. The job market is horrendous and the cost of living is soaring. Sadly, I can't see any of that changing.

I want my children to have a nest egg to fall back on in tough times or to see them on to the property ladder. It isn't holding them back or making them less independent.

I spend all my time trying to make sure they're happy, so why wouldn't I try to make their future happy, too?

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By Paula Costas, Pictures Shutterstock

# ‘My husband passed away 48 hours after we got married’

## After her partner received a devastating diagnosis, Lara Reynolds, 38, was determined to make his last wish come true

Mr&Mrs
Reynolds

Their his and hers cakes

Leaning against the door frame, parcel in hand, the delivery driver chatted away as though he had all the time in the world. But I was happy for Mike, or Mr Parcelforce-man, as I called him before I knew his name, to linger a bit longer because he was very easy on the eye! I collected pottery, so he often had a delivery for me, and we always chatted. I was sure there was a spark between us… ‘Well, I should be getting on. You know me, I can talk the hind leg off a donkey!’ Mike said.

After Mike had been delivering my parcels for four years, I found him on social media and discovered that, like me, he was single. We started messaging each other. After years of flirting on the doorstep, we arranged to meet and, by the end of our first date, I knew I’d found my soul mate. Mike was the most positive, upbeat person to be around and he was kind too, always stopping on his rounds to help people out.

Mike and Lara

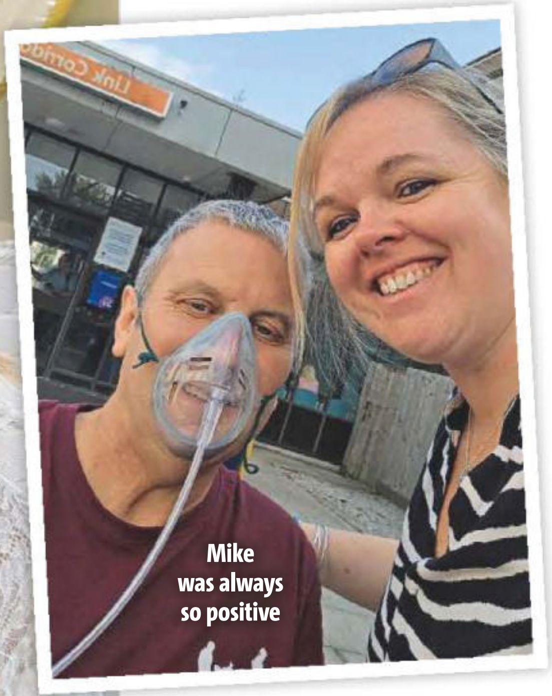
Three years later, in May 2019, we got engaged during our holiday to Tunisia. We began planning our wedding as soon as we got home to Fraddon, Cornwall. But we had to cancel it when the COVID pandemic hit. I was so disappointed. ‘We’ve all the time in the world together, love,’ said Mike, forever the optimist.

Over the next few years, life was busy. I opened my own shop, and Mike got a new job as an estate operative. It was physical, active work and he loved it. We started saving up to travel too, with Thailand first on our list. Then, one day in January 2024, Mike began to feel ill. ‘I feel like I can’t catch my breath,’ he said. It got so bad I took him to the hospital, where he was sent away with antibiotics after being told it was a chest infection. But the medication didn’t help and, over the next few weeks, we were back and forth to the hospital. Mike was given different kinds of antibiotics, but he was getting worse and there was a crackling sound coming from his chest. When a doctor suggested the problem might be in Mike’s head and asked if he’d tried yoga, I got upset. ‘He’s gone from being a fit, healthy man to hardly being able to walk without losing his breath,’ I said. ‘There’s no way yoga will help.’

Desperate, we paid for a private scan, and the results were devastating. ‘You have pulmonary fibrosis, which is an incurable lung condition,’ the consultant said. ‘We can try to prolong your life with medication. But you probably have around five years to live.’ Mike and I looked at each other, tears of shock filling our eyes. He was only 51. But back at home, Mike began searching for the positives and saw online that someone had been living with pulmonary fibrosis for 10 years. ‘I reckon I can do that. I can make it to 60,’ he said.

> ‘No doom and gloom!’

On their wedding day


Mike was always so positive

We learnt to adapt. Mike cut down his hours at work, we avoided big crowds where he could pick up infections and we planned shorter walks on the beaches near our home. We also booked the local social club for our wedding for December 2024, which was seven months away. But just three months on, Mike was struggling so much, he was admitted to hospital. His doctors were shocked by how quickly the disease seemed to be taking hold. Yet somehow, Mike remained upbeat. 'No doom and gloom, love!' he would say, whenever I got teary.

Over the following weeks, Mike became so breathless he was struggling to speak. But he typed a message on his phone asking to see the hospital chaplain. I left them to talk, but back at Mike's bedside later, he showed me a note on his phone that read, *I'd love to marry you tomorrow*. Laughing, I shook my head and said, 'I don't think that's possible.'

Mike replied, writing, *It is,* so I checked with the chaplain. When I rang the registrar, he suggested we could maybe marry early the following week, but Mike shook his head. 'Tomorrow!' he insisted. 'It'll be such a rush,' I said. But Mike grinned and typed, *You know how much you love organising!* I had to laugh. Mike hadn't lost his sense of humour.

'This is true love'

So, our wedding was booked for 27 September 2024 – the following afternoon. I rushed off to buy a dress and I found the perfect one in Marks & Spencer. I also bought his and hers caterpillar cakes and I added a tiny veil to mine and a mini oxygen tank and breathing tube to Mike's. I invited close family and friends, who dropped everything to be there. The staff on the ward decorated a private room with balloons and a Mr and Mrs sign and laid on a lovely buffet.

Walking down the hospital corridor in my wedding dress the following day felt surreal, but I couldn't wait to finally marry Mike. There wasn't a dry eye in the room as we made our vows. 'You don't need all the fancy dresses and hundreds of people – it's about love,' Mike's best friend said. After the ceremony, staff moved Mike's equipment around so I could get into bed with him, and we lay there together, in our own little cocoon. 'This is true love,' I told Mike, softly. 'It's just perfect.' I spent all the next day with him, and the day after that, I thought I would pop home quickly in the afternoon to shower and change. But I had a strong feeling I shouldn't leave him. So, I stayed at his bedside, holding his hand. 'You can sleep now,' I told him, gently.

Later that evening, I was by Mike's side as his breath slowed and finally stopped. Four months on from his diagnosis and just 48 hours after we'd finally married, Mike passed away. Saying goodbye to my husband was heartbreaking. It was only after his funeral that I realised Mike must have known he only had a matter of hours left to live and that's why he'd insisted on marrying me the day after he spoke to the chaplain.

Now, I'm going to travel as we'd planned and take Mike's ashes with me, before scattering them in one of our favourite places in Cornwall. In his name, I'm raising awareness of pulmonary fibrosis. I'll never know if an earlier diagnosis would've given us more time together, but I'm determined to make sure this disease is recognised more quickly in others. Mike and I thought we had all the time in the world to get married, but in the end, time almost ran out. I'm just glad I was able to make his final wish for us to marry come true, even if I was only his wife for 48 hours.

● *For more information and advice about pulmonary fibrosis, visit actionpf.org*

By Ann Cusack

# ‘How I walked off 14 stone’

## Mum-of-two Reesha Lewis, 39, had many mountains to climb until she reached her goal

**AFTER**
**10st 7lb**
**Size 10**

Wiping the sweat from my forehead, I tried to concentrate on putting one throbbing foot in front of the other. I was climbing a nearby mountain with my family, and it was as gruelling as I'd expected. When my mum Sue had mentioned going on a two-hour hike, I'd recoiled at the prospect. But after her insistence that the views at the top would be worth it, and equal encouragement from everyone else, I gave in and agreed to come.

Now, reaching the peak, I couldn't even appreciate the magnificent view. My legs were shaking, and heart palpitations sent my anxiety soaring as I battled to breathe. *I'm going to have a heart attack*, I thought. It was 2014, and I was only 28, but it was no wonder the hike was such a struggle for me. At 5ft 7in, I weighed 24st 8lb and wore a size 26.

Two weeks into her journey

Now she feels great

I'd always been fit and active growing up. I rode horses, played football and did cross-country running. As a teen, I was a lean and strong size eight. When I was 16, I met my husband Adam, and a few years later, after I started working as a cleaner, I stopped making time for sports and began going out for dinners and parties instead, overindulging in unhealthy food and drinks.

By the time Adam and I welcomed our son Archie in June 2011, I'd shot up to over 20 stone. Then after Nevayah came along two years later, I'd gained another four stone.

As a busy mum, I often relied on convenience food and takeaways to get by and my portion sizes were huge. For breakfast, I'd have a bacon and egg toasted sandwich, a bowl of fruit and a tub of flavoured yogurt. I'd snack on large bags of crisps and muesli bars, washing them down with three sugar-laden iced coffees. Lunch would be a foot-long meatball sandwich, followed by crackers and a few chocolate biscuits. For dinner, I'd often have a large meaty pizza with garlic bread and a big bottle of Fanta. Dessert would be a litre tub of

BEFORE
24st 8lb
Size 26

She struggled with her size

Reesha is proud of how far she's come

ice cream and a slice of cake. I felt trapped in my own skin – too heavy and tired to even try to exercise or diet.

But now, after an exhausting clamber down the mountain, I knew that something had to change. 'I'm going to climb this mountain again and again until I get fit and find it easy,' I told my family. The next morning, I left home at 3am so I could make the hike up and down before my usual daily grind began. I put in a mammoth effort, doing it twice a week, then upping it to three times, all with Mum by my side.

Four months later, I'd lost three stone, and as my fitness increased, I transformed my diet, ditching takeaways and instead choosing protein shakes and healthy homemade salads. Before long, I was climbing the mountain daily, shaving minutes off each time. After six months, I was able to complete it in under half an hour. In 2018, having lost 12st 2lb, I reached my goal weight of 12st 6lb and felt like a new woman. With my new energy, I took up boxing, and by the following December, I'd shrunk even further to 10st 7lb, making my total loss over 14 stone. I was even wearing a size 10. My friends and family were full of compliments, telling me I was an inspiration, which was lovely to hear.

In 2020, I took up running long distance again with my friend Ian. I enjoyed it so much that I began entering ultra marathons. That October, after three-and-a-half months of training, I completed a 50km race. I was the first female to cross the line and sixth overall, setting a new course record. I couldn't believe it! It was a far cry from the woman who struggled up the mountain. Afterwards, I got a taste for it and completed several more long-distance events, some 100km. I even conquered another nearby mountain, which had a height of 556 metres above sea level. Many years ago, I'd climbed it in three-and-a-half hours, but this time, I ran up and down in 26 minutes.

Then, in 2023, I tore my hamstring while competing. While I took time to heal, I used my savings to have skin removal surgery, as my extreme weight loss had left me with lots of loose skin. Two years on, I'm easing back into running and have taken up cycling too, pedalling over 100km a week. Looking back on how far I've come, I'm confident that if I hadn't changed my ways, I'd have eaten myself into an early grave. While Adam and I split last year, we remain close friends. He and our kids Archie, now 13, and Nevayah, 11, are so proud of me.

Today, I still hike up the mountain that forced me to change my ways. At my peak fitness, I managed it in 16 minutes 11 seconds! I'd encourage anyone to get out there and walk up hills or whatever you have nearby. Even just start with a gentle stroll. I'm proof that you can do it, you just have to take it one step at a time!

## DIET BEFORE

**BREAKFAST** Bacon and egg toasted sandwich, fruit and yogurt
**LUNCH** Foot-long meatball sub, crackers, chocolate biscuits
**DINNER** Large meat pizza, garlic bread, Fanta
**SNACKS** Crisps, muesli bars, iced coffee, ice cream, cake

## DIET AFTER

**BREAKFAST** Eggs with avocado and veg
**LUNCH** Salad with protein
**DINNER** Stir-fry or spaghetti with chicken mince
**SNACKS** Crackers and veg with houmous, fruit or protein yogurt

By Ruth McCarthy and Amber Connolly

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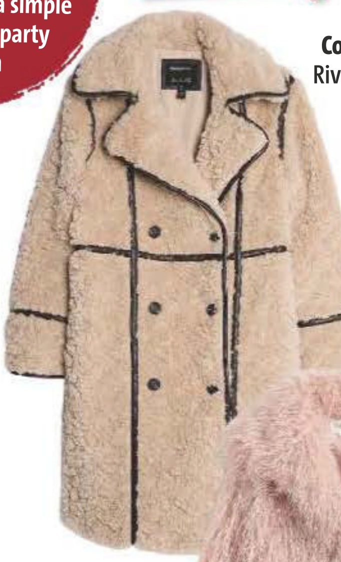
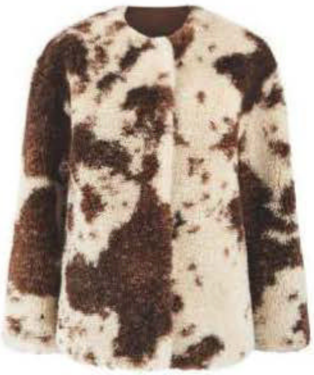
Faux fur and shearling are a shortcut to style success. Wear over jeans or over a simple dress come party season

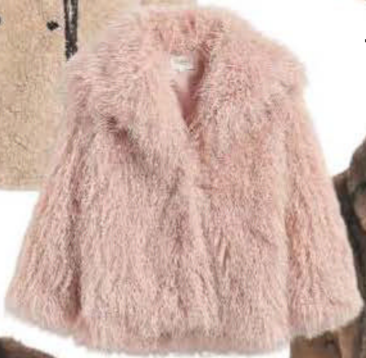
## Trendy textures



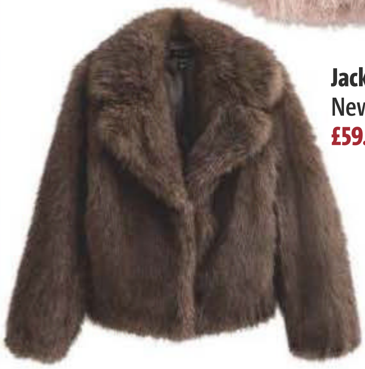
**Coat,** 6-18, River Island, **£99**



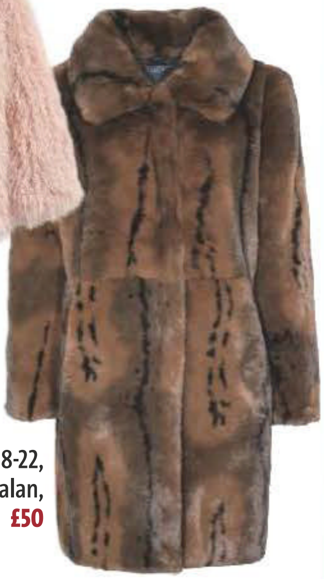
**Jacket,** 6-22, Friends Like These, **£65**



**Jacket,** XS-XL, Reserved, **£89.99**



**Jacket,** 6-22, New Look, **£59.99**



**Coat,** 8-22, Matalan, **£50**

### Stay cosy this winter with the high street's hottest coats

# WRAP UP IN STYLE

**Coat,** 6-22, **£55**; **Dress,** 6-22, **£45**; **Boots,** **£50**, all The Very Collection at very.co.uk

Continued over the page...

## Check it out

**Coat,** 8-24, Bonprix at Freemans, **£69**

**Coat,** 6-22, F&F at Tesco, **£69.50**

**Wool blend coat,** XS-XL, Reserved, **£139.99**

Scarf coats have been seen all over the catwalk and look much more expensive than their price tag

**Coat,** 6-22, The Very Collection at Very.co.uk. **£90**

**Coat,** 6-24 Tu at Sainsbury's, **£55**

## Bright ideas

**Coat,** XS-XXL, H&M, **£44.99**

**Coat,** 6-22, Marks & Spencer, **£79**

**Coat,** 8-22, Matalan, **£39**

**Wool blend coat,** 6-24, White Stuff, **£160**

Turn simple outfits into standout looks by throwing on a vibrant coat

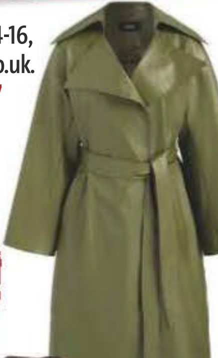
**Coat,** 10-22, mandco.com, **£65**

**Coat,** 6-22, **£65**; **Sweatshirt,** 6-22, **£25**; **Joggers,** 6-22, **£26**, all Next; **Trainers,** **£100**, New Balance

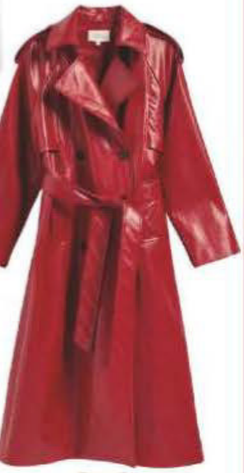
**Coat,** S-XL, £55;
**Jeans,** 8-24, £22,
both Peacocks;
**Shoes,** Stylist's own

Investing in this wardrobe staple will have you looking great for years

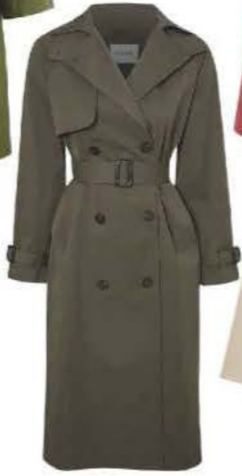
## Timeless trenches



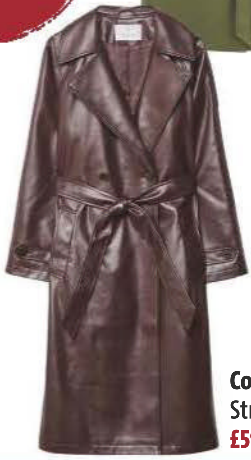
**Coat,** 4-16, Cider.co.uk. £67



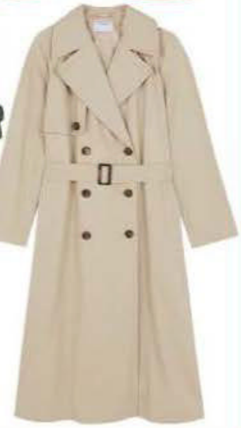
**Coat,** XS-XL, Reserved, £99.99



**Coat,** 8-24, George at ASDA, £38

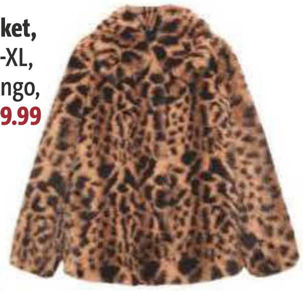


**Coat,** XS-XL, Stradivarius, £59.99

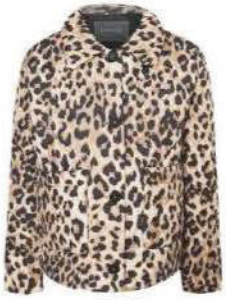


**Coat,** 6-22, Primark, £45

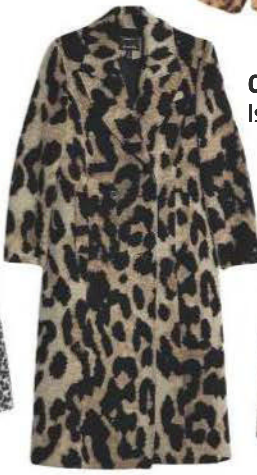
## Wild thing



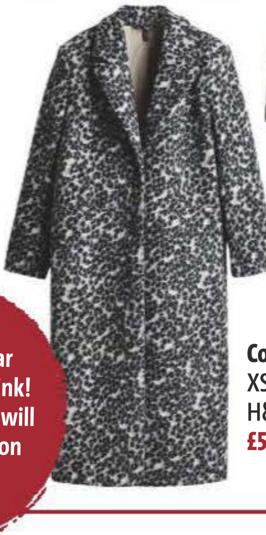
**Jacket,** XS-XL, Mango, £109.99



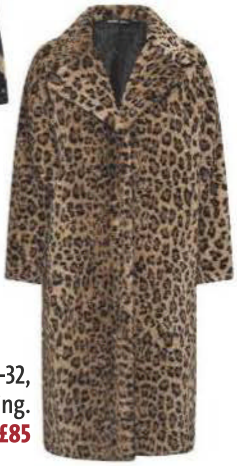
**Jacket,** 8-24, George at ASDA, £35



**Coat,** 6-22, River Island, £99



**Coat,** XS-XXL, H&M, £59.99



**Coat,** 14-32, Yoursclothing.co.uk, £85

Leopard print is easier to wear than you may think! These bold styles will add a high-fashion edge to a chic tailored outfit

**By** Cigdem Tanrioglu

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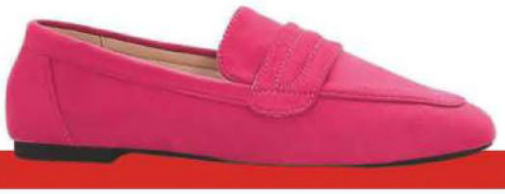
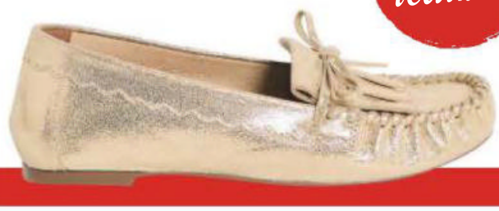


**Bonprix at Freemans, £22**

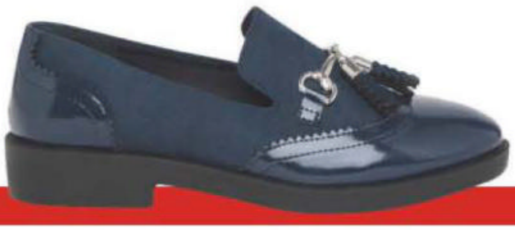


**Oliver Bonas, £75**

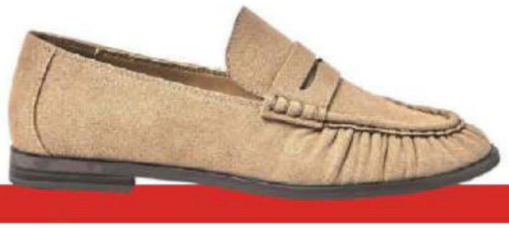
*Real leather*

# LUXE *Loafers*

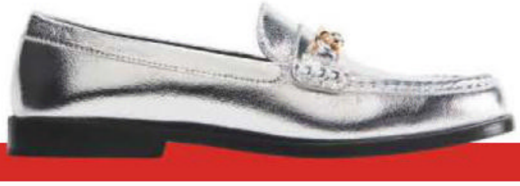
## The timeless everyday flat has had a 2025 update



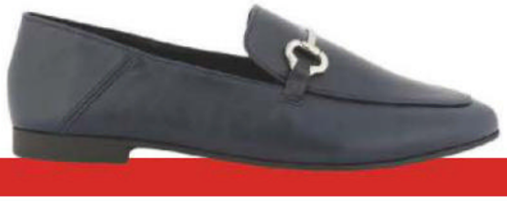
**JD Williams, £32**



**Friends Like These, £35**

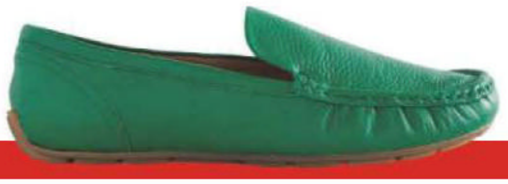


**H&M, £32.99**

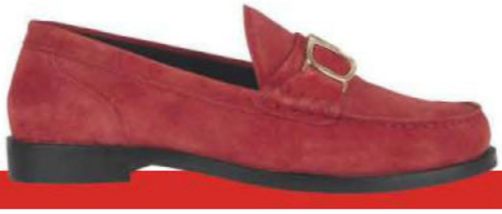


**Primark, £10**

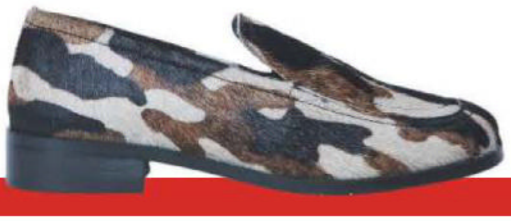
**Heidi Klum**



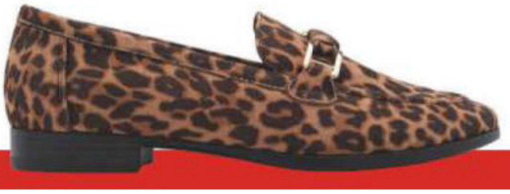
**Next, £42**



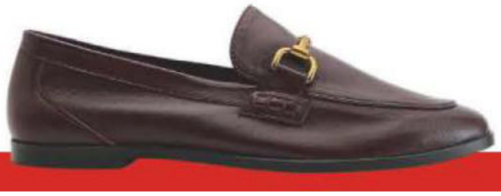
**Marks & Spencer, £55**



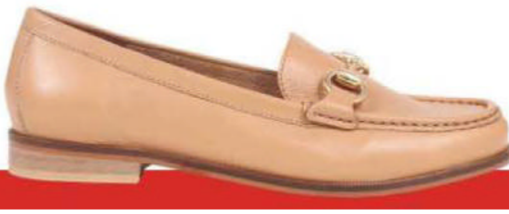
**Topshop.com, £48**



**Deichmann, £29.99**



**Reserved, £39.99**



**Jones Bootmaker, £89**

**By** Holly Downes, **Pictures** Getty Images

# The Retinol Rulebook

## Demystifying skincare's powerhouse anti-ageing ingredient

### *Spot The Difference*

Whether you're a skincare enthusiast or just getting to know the beauty space, you've likely heard of retinoids, also known as vitamin A. Retinoids are like a wake-up call for your skin; they boost cell turnover, support collagen, and gently exfoliate for a smoother, clearer complexion. Retinol and retinal are the most common forms of this anti-ageing hero – but while their names sound alike, their molecular differences mean they interact with skin differently. Retinal is essentially retinol's stronger, faster cousin, working that little bit harder to get your skin glowing. Both can improve skin's appearance, but the right choice depends on your skin type and concerns. Retinal products like **The Ordinary Retinal 0.2% Emulsion, £15.20** or **Medik8 Crystal Retinal 1 Serum, £45** may suit those with more advanced signs of ageing. If you're sensitive or new to retinoids, a gentler retinol like **Naturium Retinol Complex Serum, £22,** can help boost firmness, tone, and radiance.

The Ordinary.
Retinal 0.2% Emulsion
Emulsion de Rétinal 0.2%
Medik8
CRYSTAL RETINAL
NATURIUM
Retinol Complex Serum

Simple
smooth+ soothing water
bio-lipids + aloe
Boots
INGREDIENTS
HYALURONIC ACID 2%
SERUM
30ml e
L'ORÉAL PARIS
REVITALIFT CLINICAL
ANTI-UV FLUID
50+

### *Ease Irritation*

The only downside of retinol is that there can be side effects. It can make skin more sensitive to sun, so it is paramount that you use a high protection SPF everyday. *Bella* loves **L'Oréal Paris Revitalift Clinical SPF50+ Invisible UV Fluid, £19.99** – it's lightweight, non-sticky and has an invisible finish. You may also experience redness and dryness with the first application of retinol. We recommend building up your tolerance by using it every two to three nights, followed by a calming moisturiser such as **Simple Face Cream Soothing Water, £9.99**. It's also important to adapt any other active ingredients in your routine on the nights you use retinol. We suggest avoiding exfoliating acids such as salicylic acid, glycolic acid and other AHAs as these could cause irritation. Stick to simple ingredients such as ceramides, hyaluronic acid, and vitamin E to nourish the skin barrier. **Boots Ingredients Hyaluronic Acid Serum 2%, £5.50**, is a great option, as it hydrates without overwhelming skin.

## Know Your Strength

The right percentage of retinol for you depends on your skin type. Higher concentrations deliver quicker, more noticeable results, but it's best to start low to build tolerance, especially if you have sensitive skin. Begin with products between 0.01% and 0.03%, such as **Facetheory Retinal Supreme MultiCream 0.1%, £47**, which gently smooths fine lines, refines texture, and boosts radiance. Medium strengths around 0.2%, such as **Q+A Retinol 0.2% Serum, £12**, encourage speedier progress and a more even skin tone and texture. For stubborn concerns like deep wrinkles or hyperpigmentation, stronger formulas (0.5%–1%) may be more effective. **COSRX The Retinol 0.5 Oil, £29.99** is a concentrated option that promotes smoother, luminous skin and is ideal for more experienced users.

The Retinol 0.5
Super Vitamin E + Squalane
COSRX

Q+A
RETINOL
Facial Serum

Facetheory
Retinal Supreme
MultiCream 0.1%

## Gentle Alternatives

Retinol isn't for everyone – it can cause irritation and heightened sensitivity, especially for menopausal skin. This has led to growing interest in gentler options that deliver similar benefits. Clinically proven to offer comparable anti-ageing perks, a bakuchiol serum such as **Balance Me Smoothing Serum, £39** helps reduce fine lines while improving elasticity. Azelaic acid is a multitasking hero with anti-inflammatory and brightening properties. Known for treating acne, it also addresses hyperpigmentation. **Paula's Choice 10% Azelaic Acid Booster, £42**, targets dark spots, blemishes and redness while brightening the complexion. Niacinamide is another powerful ingredient that calms inflammation, strengthens the skin barrier, and revives dull skin. **Anua Niacinamide 10% TXA 4% Serum, £22** combines niacinamide with tranexamic acid to brighten and minimise pores all in one.

PAULA'S CHOICE
10% Azelaic Acid
BOOSTER

Anua
10+
NIACINAMIDE 10 + TXA 4

BALANCE ME
BAKUCHIOL SMOOTHING SERUM

**By** Phoebe Denman, **Pictures** Getty

# Bella's most-loved Beauty Awards ARE BACK!

Bella
PRO-AGE
*Beauty Awards*
2025

DRAGON'S BLOOD
hyaluronic night cream
SANCTUARY SPA
Lily & Rose Collection
Wet Skin Miracle Moisturiser
3 DAY MOISTURE
200ml ℮ 6.7 fl oz US
glow for it
lash FOCUS
JVN
REPAIRING SHAMPOO
SCULPTED
HydraTint

## *Win* BEAUTY PRODUCTS WORTH OVER £500!

**For your chance to win, simply visit bellamagazine.co.uk/beautyawards25 or scan this QR code to complete the nominations form.**

Closing date for entries is 20 October 2025.

# Charity BUYS

Gorgeous products, greater purpose! Shop to support Breast Cancer Awareness

## Sleeping Beauty

Nourish your skin and enhance your sleep with this super-soft, blackout eye mask which helps target fine lines, wrinkles and dark circles. Plus, 20% of sales are being donated to Future Dreams. **Drowsy Sleep Co Damask Rose Silk Sleep Mask, £69**

## Flower Power

Stop and smell the peonies – Jo Malone's iconic scent is available in a limited-edition bottle, with **£20** from each sale going to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation. **Jo Malone Special-Edition Peony & Blush Suede 100ml Cologne, £122**

## Helping Hand

Support the Breast Cancer Research Foundation by purchasing one of Aveda's skin-softening hand creams. It's packed with andiroba oil and other plant extracts to intensely moisturise dry skin. **Aveda Limited-Edition Hand Relief Moisturizing Creme, £20**

## Gently Does It

This fragrance-and-colour-free shampoo is ideal for sensitive and irritated scalps, including those undergoing cancer treatment and 50p from each sale is donated to Look Good Feel Better, a leading cancer support charity. **Philip Kingsley No Scent No Colour Gentle Shampoo, £28**

## Glow Getter

Every swipe of this radiance-boosting highlighter delivers a natural, luminous glow, while supporting a meaningful cause. 50% of the purchase price goes directly to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation. **Bobbi Brown Powerful Pink Highlighting Powder, £42.50**

## Hydration Hero

Primark's Breast Cancer Awareness campaign includes limited-edition beauty products that help boost skin hydration. The high-street hero are also donating over **£1** million to cancer charities to help aid important research. **Primark BCA Hydrate Gel Mask, £1.30**

## Body Bliss

During October, for every pink product sold, Q+A are giving **£1** to charity. Our top pick? Their luxurious shower oil, supercharged with nourishing fruit extracts and oils to leave skin feeling silky-soft. **Q+A Vitamin A.C.E Cleansing Shower Oil, £8**

## Mane Attraction

Get professional-looking locks with ghd's smooth and contoured plates that offer quick and frizz-free styling. From every sale of their pink straighteners, **£10**, is being given to Breast Cancer Now. **ghd Gold Limited Edition Hair Straightener, £199**

By Emma White **Pictures:** Shutterstock

# *The Fast* 800 PLAN

Feel fabulous with Dr Michael Mosley's famous plan

We've teamed up with The Fast 800 to show you just how easy, delicious and nutritious the 5:2 way of eating is to do this autumn. The Fast 800 was co-founded by the late Dr Michael Mosley, along with his wife Dr Clare Bailey Mosley, and a team of doctors and weight-loss experts. Clare tells us, 'The Fast 800 has been extensively researched, and is a proven way to not only lose weight and keep it off, but improve your metabolic health. If you find the weight is creeping on, intermittent fasting can be incredibly effective and can also help you shed weight from the waist and the neck. Cutting your calories to between 800 to 1000 a day, two days a week, can make all the difference – and it's quite simple to introduce.'

## YOUR 5-DAY PLAN

To follow the 5:2 approach you'll have 800-1000 calories twice per week, then eat a healthy lower carb Mediterranean-style diet for the rest of the week. Add extra low-calorie, non-starchy veggies to any of the meals if you wish, for a boost of fibre. To get to a week's worth of meals, simply repeat the non-fasting days for a total of five, and stick to the two fasting days. All meals serve one, unless otherwise specified.

## Day 1

### Fasting day

**869 calories, 73.6g protein, 13.3g carbs, 57.8g fat, 9.6g fibre**

### Breakfast

**Cottage cheese with berries**

**209 calories, 23.5g protein, 6g carbs, 8.6 fat, 1.6g fibre**

Mix ½tsp ground cinnamon into 150g full-fat cottage cheese and serve topped with 60g berries.

### Lunch

**Smoked salmon and egg salad**

**335 calories, 20.5g protein, 3.2g carbs, 26g fat, 4.5g fibre**

Boil 1 large egg in a small pan of water for 8min. Drain and run under cold water to stop cooking. Peel and chop. In a bowl combine a sliced quarter of an avocado, 50g rocket, 40g halved cherry tomatoes, and a sliced quarter of a red onion, to make a salad. Add 50g smoked salmon and drizzle over ½tbsp extra virgin olive oil and the juice of a quarter of a lemon. Serve with the egg.

### Dinner

**Pork ball miso soup**

**348 calories, 29.6g protein, 4.1g carbs, 23.2g fat, 3.5g fibre**

Preheat the oven to 200°C/gas 6. Line a baking tray. In a bowl mix together 125g pork mince, 2cm grated root ginger, ½tsp chilli flakes, and 5g chopped fresh coriander. Form 7 small meatballs and place onto the baking tray. Drizzle with 1tsp sesame oil and bake for 12min while you make the soup. Place 50g finely chopped button mushrooms and ½tsp olive oil into a pot and sauté for a few min. Add 1tbsp miso paste, 1tbsp tamari and 300ml water. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer. Add 1 pack of roughly chopped pak choi and half a chopped spring onion to the soup, just before you take the pork balls out of the oven. Serve the soup and pork balls together in a bowl.

the fast800®

**Prep breakfast for tomorrow morning**

## Day 2

**Non fasting day**

**1563 calories, 72.6g protein, 95.6g carbs, 92.4g fat, 32.5g fibre**

### Breakfast

**Banana walnut chia pudding**

**479 calories, 17.3g protein, 27.1g carbs, 30.6g fat, 15.9g fibre**

In a bowl mix together half a mashed banana, 230ml full fat milk, 40g chia seeds, ½tsp vanilla extract and ½tsp ground cinnamon. Leave for 5min then stir again, cover and put in the fridge overnight. In the morning, served with 15g chopped walnuts.

### Lunch

**Courgette carrot fritters**

**499 calories, 28.3g protein, 28.8g carbs, 28.2g fat, 8.6g fibre**

In a bowl mix together 1 grated courgette, 1 grated carrot, quarter of a diced red onion, 40g crumbled feta cheese, 10g chopped fresh coriander, 30g buckwheat flour and 2 large eggs. Season. Heat ½tbsp olive oil in a non-stick frying pan on a medium heat Add 2tbsp batter per fritter and fry for 2min. Flip and cook for a further 1-2min until cooked through. Remove, and repeat until the batter is used up.

### Dinner

**Almond pesto pasta. Makes 2 servings**

**585 calories, 27g protein, 39.7g carbs, 33.6g fat, 8g fibre per serving**

Toast 40g almonds in a dry frying pan over a medium heat for 2min. Transfer to a food processor along with 2 peeled garlic cloves, 30g fresh basil and 40g chopped Parmesan. Blitz until roughly chopped. Add 1 roughly chopped tomato and 2tbsp olive oil. Pulse until the tomatoes are a bit chunky. Season. Cook 120g dry weight red lentil pasta according to the package instructions. Remove from the heat and plunge a spiralised/julienne courgette into the pan for 30-60sec to soften. Drain. Add the pesto into the pasta and put back on the heat to warm through. Add the pasta and courgette and toss to coat. Save half for lunch tomorrow.

## Day 3

**Non fasting day**

**1552 calories, 87.3g protein, 90.8g carbs, 87.7g fat, 25.4g fibre**

### Breakfast

**Spinach and feta muffins**

**384 calories, 21.8g protein, 2.4g carbs, 31.1g fat, 4.9g fibre**

Preheat the oven to 180°C/gas 4. Line a muffin tray with baking paper, or use a silicon muffin tray. Wilt 50g chopped fresh spinach in boiling water for 2min, drain, squeeze out excess water and let cool while you prepare the rest of the mix. In a bowl mix 1 large egg, 40g crumbled feta cheese, 30g ground almonds, 1 pinch of baking powder, half a finely chopped spring onion and a pinch of salt and pepper. Add the spinach and mix well until combined. Spoon the mixture evenly into the muffin tray – it should make 1-2 regular muffins or 3-4 mini muffins. Bake for 15-20min until browning on top, and a skewer inserted into the middle comes out clear. Allow to cool for 2min before serving

Continued over the page...

### Lunch

**Leftover almond pesto pasta**

### Dinner

**One pot beef, beans and rice**

**583 calories, 38.5g protein**
**48.7g carbs, 23g fat, 12.5g fibre**

In a bowl coat 125g beef sirloin steak, sliced into strips, with 1tsp paprika, ½tsp ground cumin and a pinch of salt and pepper. Heat ½tbsp olive oil in a non-stick pan (one that has a lid), over a medium heat and sear the beef for 1min on each side. Remove and set aside. Add another ½tbsp olive oil to the pan with quarter of a diced red onion and 1 minced garlic clove. Once softening, add a chopped quarter of a red pepper and 1 grated carrot and cook for 3min. Add 100g drained and rinsed tinned black beans, 40g dried brown rice, 100ml beef stock and 100g can chopped tomatoes. Bring to the boil, stir the beef back into the pan, cover with the lid and reduce to a simmer. After 25min, remove the pan from the heat and allow to rest, still covered, for 10min to fully cook the rice (add more stock or water if it becomes too dry). Serve topped with jalapeños and fresh coriander if you like.

By Julia Smurthwaite, **Pictures** Getty,Shutterstock

## Day 4

**Fasting day**

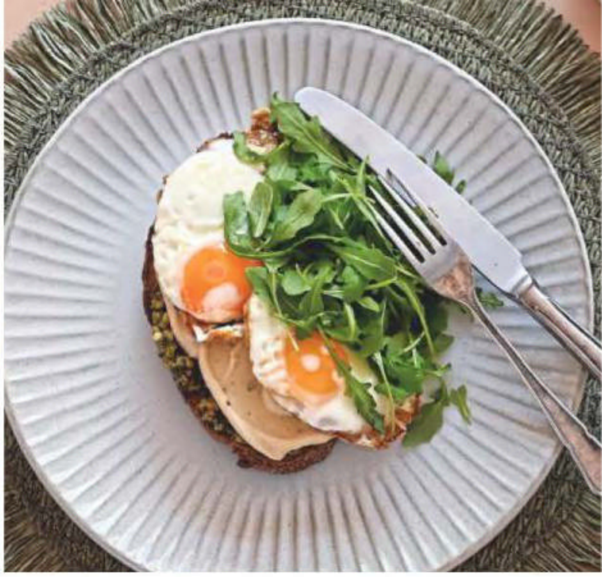
**831 calories, 82.4g protein,**
**29.3g carbs, 39.8g fat, 12.7g fibre**

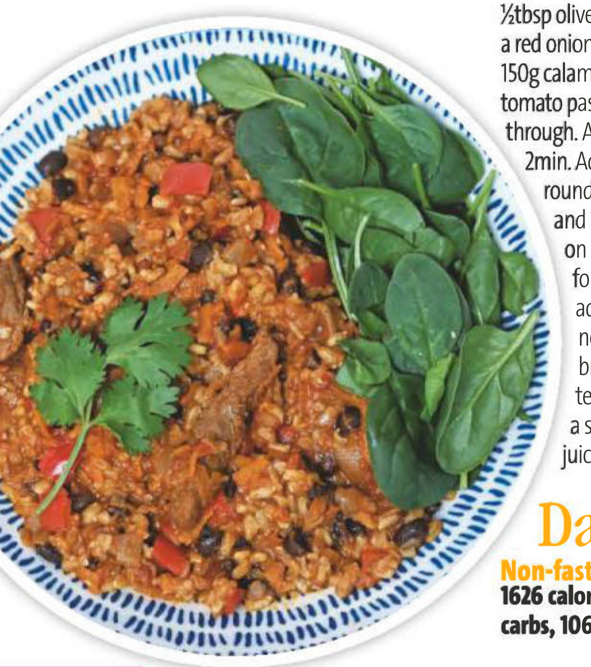
### Breakfast

**Herby mushroom baked eggs**

**288 calories, 18.5g protein,**
**3.4g carbs, 21.8g fat and 3.4g fibre**

Preheat the oven to 200°C/gas 6. Destem and clean 2 portobello mushrooms and place top side down on a lined baking tray. Divide 15g butter between each mushroom and spread a pinch of fresh thyme leaves and 5g chopped fresh parsley across the top. Bake for 15-20min until the mushrooms have softened and release their juices. Carefully crack 1 large egg each into each mushroom, season, then place back in the oven for around 10min, until the eggs are cooked to your liking. Garnish with additional herbs if you like.





### Lunch

**Greek chicken lunch box**

**316 calories, 35.5g protein,**
**20.8g carbs, 8.6g fat, 4.9g fibre**

To a lunchbox add 100g sliced cooked chicken, 20g kalamata olives, 50g cherry tomatoes, 50g sliced cucumber, a sliced ⅛ of a red onion and 50g tzatziki. Enjoy with half a wholemeal pita bread.

### Dinner

**Calamari in zimino**

**227 calories, 28.4g protein,**
**5.1g carbs, 9.4g fat, 4.4g fibre**

In a pan (with lid), over a medium heat add ½tbsp olive oil and sauté a sliced quarter of a red onion for 2min until softened. Add 150g calamari, cut into 1cm rings, 1tbsp tomato paste and ½tsp chilli flakes and stir through. Allow the mixture to infuse for 2min. Add half a courgette, cut into rounds, 100g chopped Swiss chard and 125ml water. Stir through, put lid on and turn the heat to low. Braise for 15-20min, check regularly and add a splash more water if needed, it should have a bit of broth. Check the calamari is tender, and when ready serve with a sprinkle of fresh parsley and the juice of a quarter of a lemon.

## Day 5

**Non-fasting day**

**1626 calories, 89.7g protein, 62.7g carbs, 106.1g fat, 35.3g fibre**

### Breakfast

**Repeat banana walnut chia pudding recipe from day 1**

### Lunch

**Pesto hummus and eggs on toast**

**564 calories, 26.6g protein,**
**21.2g carbs, 39.5g fat, 9.4g fibre**

Heat ½tbp olive oil in a small frying pan on a medium heat. When hot, crack in 2 large eggs and fry to your liking. While the eggs are cooking, toast 1 slice of rye bread. When done, spread 15g basil pesto on top, then 40g hummus. Top with the eggs and 30g rocket. Season and enjoy.

### Dinner

**Parsley and Parmesan chicken**

**583 calories, 45.8g protein,**
**14.4g carbs, 36g fat, 10g fibre**

Preheat the oven to 200°C/gas 6. In a roasting tray place 150g chopped butternut squash, 100g halved Brussels sprouts, wedged quarter of a red onion, drizzled with 1tbsp olive oil, seasoned, and tossed together. Roast for 20min. While the veg are roasting, mix 1tbsp finely chopped fresh parsley, 15 ground almonds, 20g grated Parmesan, the zest and juice of ¼ of a lemon, and a pinch of salt and black pepper, together. Flatten out 150g skinless and boneless chicken thigh and generously coat with the parsley mix on both sides. Remove the veg from the oven, toss. Fold the chicken thigh over and place into the middle of the tray, surrounded by the veg. Sprinkle any extra Parmesan on top. Bake for around 12-15min until the chicken is cooked through. Serve with fresh leafy greens.

## Extra help

For more delicious meals and extra advice check out their signature 12-week weight-loss programme, and our special discount (right). For days when cooking from scratch isn't possible, The Fast 800 has a wide range of tasty convenient options, made from natural ingredients with no added sugar, for extra support with intermittent fasting and weight-loss. The range includes shakes, protein bars, hot chocolate, an apple and blackcurrant clear protein drink, and a delicious new cloudy apple fibre blend drink, to help boost fibre and probiotic intake.

the fast800
FIBRE BLEND
CLOUDY APPLE

the
fast800®

## 25% OFF THE 12-WEEK PROGRAMME

**For a limited time, *Bella* readers can get 25% off the full price of The Fast 800 12-week programme. The programme discount is valid for new members, normally £29.99 a month for three months. The plan offers three flexible approaches that follow the principles of a moderately low-carb, Mediterranean-style diet. You'll get 900+ tasty recipes, personalised meal plans and shopping lists, guided exercise, community and health coach support, online trackers and more. Visit thefast800.com/programme and apply the code BELLA25 at checkout. Discount is valid from 14 October 2025 until 23.59GMT on 14 November 2025. Discount is not transferable or redeemable for cash or credit. Full terms and conditions apply, please visit thefast800.com for details.**

NB. If you are pregnant, breastfeeding, under 18 or have a medical condition please seek professional advice before changing your diet.

# This week we're...

Keep up-to-date with the latest trends in the foodie world

## SNACKING ON...

Award-winning nut butter brand Pip & Nut has launched its first ever protein bars. With crispy pieces, roasted nuts and topped with gooey caramel, each bar contains 10g of protein. Available in three flavours, they offer a healthy pick-me-up any time of day. From pipandnut.com, and supermarkets, **£1.95** per bar.

Pip & Nut
DARK CHOCOLATE PEANUT PROTEIN
CARAMEL ALMOND PROTEIN
CHOCOLATE PEANUT PROTEIN
10g PROTEIN

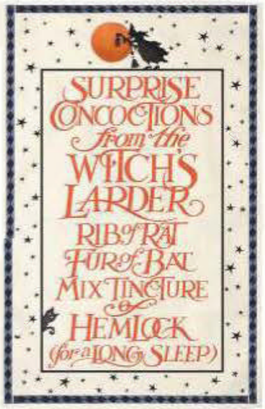
## ORDERING...

Add Zerup pocket-sized syrups from More Nutrition to water to make delicious flavour-packed drinks – perfect for on-the-go hydration. With no added sugar, each dinky bottle makes over 8 litres of drinks (the syrups are also delicious in smoothies!) With flavours from tropical to limited edition cocktail favourites, there is something for everyone. From morenutrition.co.uk and Amazon, **£6.99** for 65ml.

More
ZERUP
Multifruit
Flavour
0 SUGAR
0 KCAL
V VEGAN
8+ litres

## GETTING SPOOKED

Kit out your kitchen for Halloween with Emma Bridgewater's selection of ghastly and ghoulish goodies. We love the Halloween Toast Tea Towel (**£13**), Roasting Tray (**£45**) and Halloween Toast Tin Tray (**£10**). They are beautiful investment items that will be enjoyed year after year. From emmabridgewater.co.uk and Emma Bridgewater shops.


SURPRISE
CONCOCTIONS
from the
WITCH'S
LARDER
RIB of RAT
FUR of BAT
MIX TINCTURE
HEMLOCK
(for a LONG SLEEP)

ROASTED PUMPKIN

## DRINKING...

Benefit Juice's new Women's Health juice range provides essential nutrients, vitamins and minerals needed during menopause and pregnancy, and general wellness. The drinks enhance energy levels, sooth hormonal imbalances and the normal functioning of the nervous system. Using 100% fruit and veg, the juices are excellent for everyday drinking. From Tesco and Waitrose, **£4.30** per 750ml.

BERRIES, CHERRY & BEETROOT JUICE + MULTIVITAMINS
BENEFIT® MENOSUPPORT
FATIGUE REDUCTION
PSYCHOLOGICAL FUNCTION
HORMONE REGULATION
BONE MAINTENANCE

## EATING...

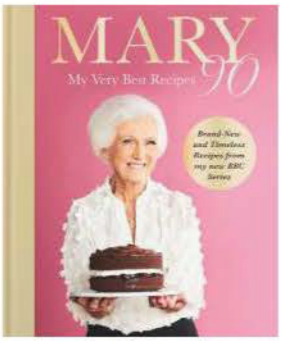
New York Bakery's new health and wellness range offers nutritional benefits while giving you the iconic New York taste and chewy texture. Available in Lighter, Protein Boost and Fibre Plus varieties, they are ideal for those looking for simple swaps to support a healthier lifestyle. Great for breakfast, lunch and snacking. From supermarkets, **£1.90** for 5.

NEW YORK BAKERY
LIGHTER
PROTEIN BOOST
FIBRE PLUS

NEW YORK BAKERY
PROTEIN BOOST

## READING...

Celebrate Mary Berry's 90th birthday by enjoying her new book *Mary 90: My Very Best Recipes* (BBC Books, **£28**). It's a career-spanning collection of recipes for every occasion, from Chocolate Baileys Mousse to her Best Brownies – each with a wonderful story behind it. It's a book that you'll turn to again and again. From bookshops and Amazon.


MARY 90
My Very Best Recipes
Brand-New and Timeless Recipes from my new BBC Series

**By** Hayley Merrick **Pictures** PR images/Tara Fisher/BBC Books.

# Supercharge dinner time

Flavour-forward recipes you will want to cook – and love to eat

## Harissa keema shakshuka with naan soldiers

*Serves* 4 *Takes* 55min

- Olive oil, for frying
- 1 large red onion, finely diced
- Fine sea salt
- 1½tsp cumin seeds, crushed
- 2tsp sumac, plus extra to garnish
- 400g minced lamb, at least 10% fat
- 3 fat garlic cloves, crushed to a paste
- 2tsp grated fresh ginger root
- 1tbsp harissa or rose harissa paste, plus extra to garnish
- 3tbsp tomato purée
- 2tbsp dark brown sugar
- 2tbsp white wine vinegar
- 400g can chopped tomatoes
- 4 eggs
- 150g Greek yogurt, 1 fat garlic clove, crushed to a paste, 2 large or 4 mini naans, butter, 1tbsp chopped dill fronds, pinch of sumac, to serve

*1 Heat a splash of olive oil in a deep frying pan. Add the onion with a pinch of salt. Cook over a medium heat for 8-9min until translucent. Stir through the cumin seeds and sumac for 1min.*

*2 Add the lamb and fry for 7-8min until most of the water has evaporated and the meat is just starting to brown. Next, add the garlic, ginger, harissa and tomato purée. Cook for another 1min, then stir through the sugar, vinegar, 1½tsp of salt, the tomatoes and 200ml boiling water. Cover with a lid and continue to cook over a medium heat for 10-12min, stirring occasionally, until the oils start to separate in the sauce.*

*3 Remove the lid and cook for another 8-10min to let the sauce thicken. Make four indents in the sauce and carefully crack one whole egg into each cavity. Cover with a lid and cook over a medium heat for 7-9min until the whites are set to your liking.*

*4 Meanwhile, in a separate bowl, stir together the Greek yogurt, garlic and a pinch of salt. Toast the naans, rub over a small knob of butter, sprinkle with sumac and slice into soldiers. Ripple the garlic yogurt through the keema, sprinkle with dill, an extra drizzle of harissa and a pinch of sumac. Enjoy.*

# Mango chicken schnitzel with lime-leaf smashed peas

*Serves 2 Takes 45min, plus marinating*

- **5tbsp mango chutney, plus extra to serve**
- **3 fat garlic cloves**
- **1tbsp Worcestershire sauce**
- **2tbsp apple cider vinegar**
- **500g chicken breasts (2 large ones), boneless and skinless**
- **Cornflour, for dredging**
- **Fine sea salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- **1 large egg**
- **60g panko breadcrumbs**
- **1tbsp nigella seeds**
- **2tbsp sesame seeds**
- **Sunflower or vegetable oil, for frying**
- **Lemon wedges, to serve**

**FOR THE PEAS**

- **400g frozen peas**
- **12-14 fresh lime leaves**
- **About 30 fresh mint leaves**
- **Zest and juice of 1 small lemon**
- **20g butter**
- **Splash of olive oil, for frying**
- **2 whole spring onions, finely chopped**

*1 Put the mango chutney, garlic, Worcestershire sauce, vinegar, 1tsp of salt and 1tsp of black pepper in a small blender and whizz to a fine paste.*

*2 Place one of the chicken breasts between two sheets of baking paper and use a rolling pin to gently flatten into a thin steak approximately 3-4mm thick. Repeat with the other breast. Transfer to a large bowl and smother both breasts all over with the mango marinade, then leave for at least 30min.*

*3 Prepare the smashed peas. Boil the peas in a pan of salted water for 3min, then drain and set aside. Use a small blender to whizz together the lime leaves, mint, lemon juice and 1tsp of zest to a very fine paste.*

*4 Melt the butter in a saucepan with a splash of oil, then add the green paste, frying over a medium heat for 2min. Next, add the spring onions, cook for another 1min, then add the cooked peas, plus 1tsp of salt. Cook for a final 1min, then either smash chunkily with a potato masher, or use a hand blender to turn into a mushy pea purée. Keep warm.*

*5 To coat the schnitzels, prepare three large bowls: one with cornflour, one with beaten egg, and one with a mix of breadcrumbs, nigella seeds and sesame seeds. Dredge one marinated chicken schnitzel in the cornflour, flipping it to coat all over. Leave for 30sec, then dredge again so the surface is completely covered. Shake off the excess, then dip into the egg, and finally into the breadcrumbs, coating liberally all over. Repeat with the second schnitzel.*

*6 Heat 2cm of oil in a deep frying pan to 165°C. Cook the schnitzels, one at a time, over a medium heat for 6-7min – turning occasionally – until crunchy and golden brown and cooked through. Serve with the smashed peas, lemon wedge and extra mango chutney on the side.*

# Treacle mocha & blonde chocolate brownies

Flavour Heroes
Gurdeep Loyal

This recipe is taken from ***Flavour Heroes* by Gurdeep Loyal** (Quadrille, £27)

*Makes 16 Takes 55min, plus cooling and chilling*

- **Olive oil, for brushing**
- **5 large eggs**
- **200g caster sugar**
- **250g dark chocolate (at least 60% cocoa), snapped into pieces**
- **225g butter**
- **2 heaped tbsp instant espresso powder**
- **65g cocoa powder**
- **125g black treacle**
- **125g blonde or white chocolate**
- **75ml soured cream**
- **150g plain flour**
- **¼tsp bicarbonate of soda (baking soda)**
- **1tsp fine sea salt**

*1 Preheat the oven to 195°C/fan 175°C. Brush a deep-sided 23cm baking tin with olive oil, then line with baking paper.*

*2 In a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat together 4 of the eggs and the sugar for 5-6min until the mixture has doubled in volume.*

*3 Put the dark chocolate, butter and instant espresso powder in a heatproof bowl over a saucepan of simmering water to melt together, stirring to combine. Remove the bowl from the pan, then stir through the cocoa powder and treacle. Leave to cool for 2min.*

*4 Meanwhile, melt the blonde chocolate in another heatproof bowl over the same pan of hot water. Remove the bowl from the heat then stir through the soured cream. Cool for 2min, then crack in the remaining egg, whisking thoroughly. Set aside.*

*5 Slowly pour the dark chocolate-butter into the stand mixer bowl, gently folding it by hand into the whisked eggs using a spatula to retain as much air as possible.*

*6 In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, bicarbonate of soda and salt. Add a quarter of the dry ingredients to the batter, folding it through fully, then add the rest, a quarter at a time.*

*7 Pour half of the batter into the lined tin, drizzle over half the blonde chocolate cream and swirl with a cocktail stick. Then pour in the rest of the batter, drizzle with the remaining blonde chocolate cream, again swirling into a nice pattern.*

*8 Place the tin on a baking sheet and bake for 25min until cakey on the rim and puffed up in the middle. Remove from the oven and leave to cool in the tin to room temperature. Then chill for at least 12hr, until fudgy. Slice into 16 squares and enjoy.*

**By** Hayley Merrick **Recipe** Gurdeep Loyal **Pictures** Patricia Niven

# Kick-start good kidney ba

Follow these simple steps to help keep this vital organ in top health

They are only around 10cm long and 3cm wide – the size of a clenched fist – but there's no denying our kidneys are one of the most important organs in our body.

Not only do they filter 180 litres of our blood each day and help remove waste from the body, but they also help regulate our blood pressure, control the production of red blood cells and keep our bones strong.

High blood pressure is linked to kidney disease

They are vital to our health and wellbeing. Yet it's thought that of the 7.2 million people in the UK estimated to have chronic kidney disease (CKD), a staggering one million may be unaware that they have it, with one in four of us unclear of the main signs of the condition.

In fact, a survey by Kidney Research UK found that 80% of participants didn't even know where their kidneys were, despite nearly 40% of them being at some risk.

Professor Simon Davies, a consultant nephrologist and a trustee of Kidney Research UK, explains, 'The big problem with chronic kidney disease is that it's a silent condition, meaning you can lose quite a lot of kidney function before you're even aware of a problem.

'It's only when function gets down to around 50% that people start getting some symptoms, and even then it can be hard to attribute these to the kidneys.

'For example, the first symptom that people often experience is just tiredness. It's only later, when kidney function worsens, that people may present with more specific symptoms such as anaemia, swelling of the feet or ankles or poor appetite.

'Signs of more active disease can include persistent puffiness around the eyes, blood in the urine, foamy urine, itchy skin, food tasting different to how it does normally, nausea, exhaustion, muscle cramps and urinating more frequently.

'Often however, kidney disease is only picked up when someone develops high blood pressure or diabetes, which are the two leading causes of the condition.

> '7.2 million people in the UK have chronic kidney disease'

'This is why it's so important to visit your doctor if you have any concerns, enabling your GP to check your blood pressure and perform blood and urine tests if needed to explore your kidney function.

'It's crucial that we can identify people who have CKD. Unless urgent preventative action is taken to improve diagnosis and

Tiredness can be the first symptom of CKD

# bits

treatment rates, CKD is predicted to be the fifth leading cause of death globally by 2040.

'Yet we've now got several classes of drugs which seem to be having a really useful impact for those affected – we just need to know who they are.

'Furthermore, there are steps everyone can take to reduce their risk of CKD in the first place.'

Here, Professor Davies explores how.

## Manage underlying conditions

'High blood pressure and diabetes are the two leading causes of kidney disease so, if you've got high blood pressure, it's crucial to make sure that you're taking your tablets properly and that the condition is well monitored. Likewise, if you're diabetic, the better you monitor and manage your diabetes the less likely you are to get kidney damage or, worse, kidney failure.'

## Watch your drinking

'Drinking alcohol excessively can raise your blood pressure and cholesterol levels, which can go hand in hand with kidney disease.

'Excessive alcohol intake can also contribute towards dehydration, which is unhelpful as staying hydrated helps to keep our kidneys healthy.

'In fact, research suggests that drinking plain water, in particular, can have a potentially protective effect on kidney function.

'It's also worth noting that the elderly, interestingly, often don't experience thirst in quite the same way as younger people, and can forget to drink, so be mindful perhaps of encouraging them to drink a bit more water when you can.'

## Skip the salt

'A diet high in salt is linked with high blood pressure, which can damage your kidneys. Try not to add salt to food and avoid lots of processed foods. For example, if your diet consists of three packets of crisps a day, it's going to be hard to control raised blood pressure. In contrast, eating a healthy, balanced diet can help keep your blood pressure at a healthy level and reduce your risk of kidney disease.'

## Be mindful of painkillers

'Try to avoid regular or long-term use of non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs) such as aspirin and ibuprofen, which can damage your kidneys. It's OK to take these medications infrequently, but we would always try and persuade people to take alternatives like paracetamol instead, where possible, to minimise the risk to the kidneys.'

## Quit smoking

Smokers are four times more likely than non-smokers to develop kidney failure.

Professor Davies says, 'Not only does smoking increase your risk of cardiovascular disease, which is associated with a higher risk of CKD, but it can also lead to surges in blood pressure and increase your risk of developing some kidney cancers. If you're able to speak to your GP about getting help to stop it can make a big difference.'

> 'Smokers are four times more likely to develop kidney failure'

## Keep your weight in check

'Taking regular physical exercise and being careful of your weight are some of the very best things you can do for your kidneys. Stopping yourself from becoming overweight is fundamental because type two diabetes, which is strongly associated with being overweight and obese, is one of the key causes of kidney disease.

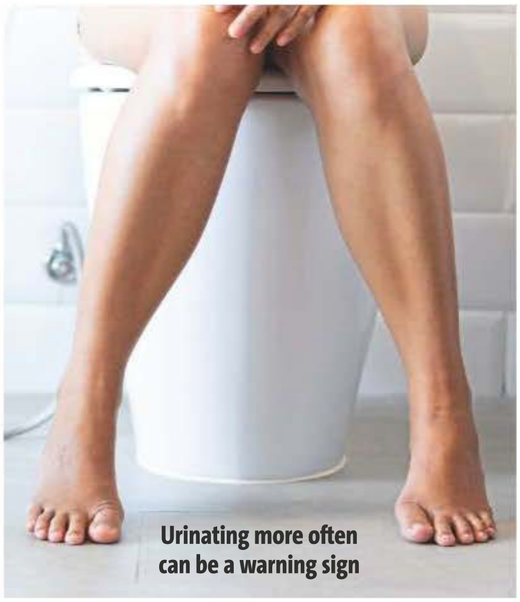
'Obviously there are drugs out there now which help people lose weight and these may have a positive effect on preventing people from getting CKD in the future. However, the challenge remains that the weight may return for these people once they stop taking the drug, so building a lifestyle where you're naturally active anyway is key.'

## Be proactive

'As we age, especially when we reach the age of 50, we do need to be proactive and take responsibility for our health – for example, making sure we're always on top of our routine health checks. The NHS offer checks that can tell you if you're more at risk of things like diabetes, kidney disease and heart disease.

'Keeping on top of your health doesn't have to be complicated. You can simply ask your GP to check your blood pressure or even buy a small monitor for yourself. It's about saying, "I'm partly in control of my destiny and I'm doing what I can to live healthily."'

● *For more information, please visit kidneyresearchuk.org*

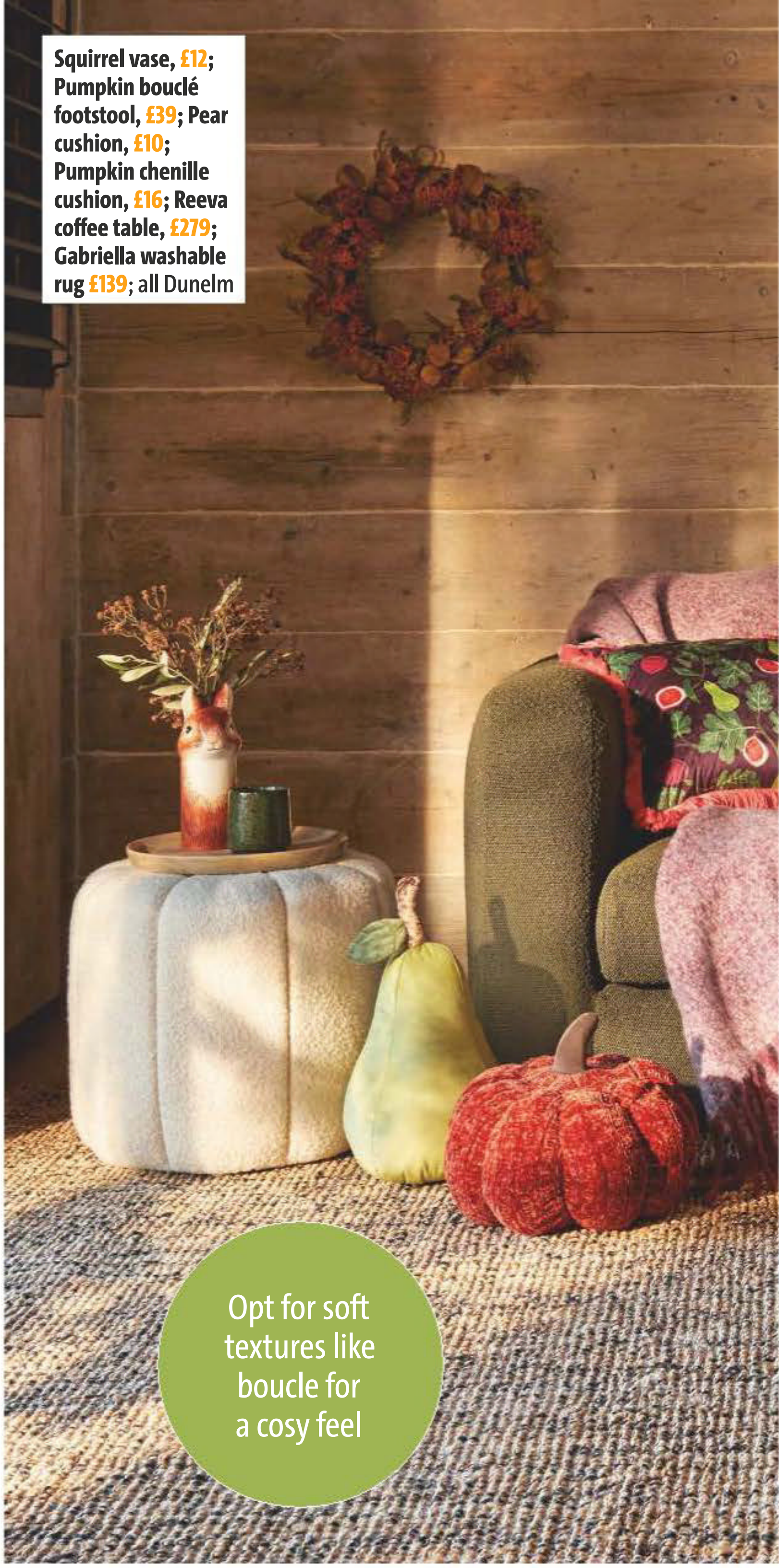


Urinating more often can be a warning sign

By Stephanie May, **Pictures** Adobe Stock

# Harvest HUES

Bring the autumn indoors with rich colours, cosy textures, and timeless seasonal charm



**Squirrel vase**, £12; **Pumpkin bouclé footstool**, £39; **Pear cushion**, £10; **Pumpkin chenille cushion**, £16; **Reeva coffee table**, £279; **Gabriella washable rug** £139; all Dunelm

Opt for soft textures like boucle for a cosy feel

**Jug**, Flying Tiger, £10

**Serving plate**, Flying Tiger, £10

**Draught excluder**, Next, £24

**Pot pourri**, Next, £12

**Vase**, La Redoute, £29.99

**Cushion**, Next, £22

By Lucy Brown

**Placemat**, Home Bargains, **£1.99**

**Throw**, John Lewis, **£45**

Blend warm hues of brown and amber with pops of earthy green

**Pear side plate, £4.50; Pumpkin glass lantern, £10; Scalloped placemats, £6** (set of 2); **Reactive glaze dinner plate £4 Fig side plate, £4.50**, all Dunelm

**Spoon rest**, Primark, **£3.50**

**Vase**, H&M Home, **£29.99**

**Cushion cover**, H&M Home, **£12.99**

**Reed diffuser**, Primark, **£5**

**Mug**, Morrisons, **£4**

**Candle**, TkMaxx, **£19.99**

**Tumbler**, John Lewis, **£8**

**Hand towel**, Matalan, **£6**

**Basket**, Matalan, **£9**

THE DARKEST CRIMES AND EVIL MINDS

CRIME MONTHLY

MENENDEZ BROTHERS: SHOCK AS JUDGE RULES THEY'RE 'STILL DANGEROUS'
'DEATH-FAKER' RAPIST
INSIDE THE TWISTED MIND OF NICHOLAS ROSSI
FRED & ROSE WEST SURVIVOR
'I WAS LUCKY TO GET OUT ALIVE'
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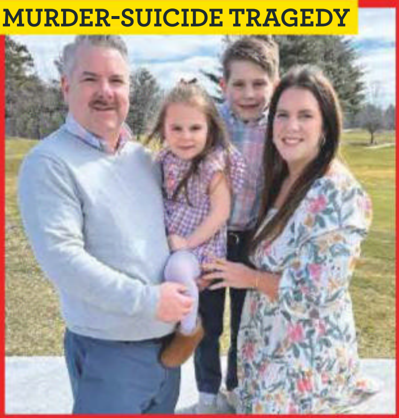
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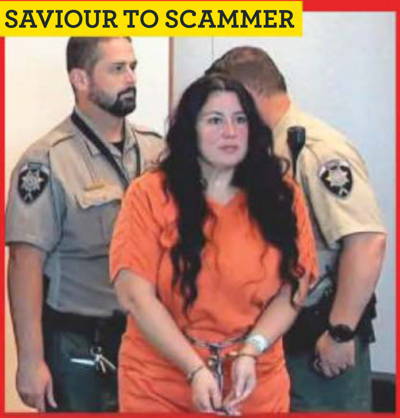
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£50 Star letter

## Remarkable Ruth!

In her sparkly gown, Ruth Jones looked absolutely sensational at the National TV Awards, and miles away from Nessa in *Gavin And Stacey* in 'Ruth's divorce glow up – at 59!' (issue 38). It's exciting to hear that she's teamed up with James Corden again for an Apple TV comedy show, which is sure to be a guaranteed success.

**Sally Wilton**, Bournemouth

## Nanny woes

I felt so sorry for Coleen Nolan when I read 'Coleen's heartbreak over estranged granddaughter' (issue 39). Unfortunately, the arrangements for contact between grandparents and their grandchildren can be adversely impacted for various reasons. It's a very sad state of affairs. It's tragic, because many grandparents long for a deep emotional connection with their grandchildren.

**Vanya Hammett**, Cheshire

## Talking point

A woman recently shared online that she felt offended when a younger lady told her she 'looked great for 60', arguing that it was a backhanded compliment. So, we ask… is it wrong to tell people they look good for their age?

If I was praised for looking good at my age, I'd thank them and accept the compliment graciously. Own it – we're all queens!

**Sara Lum**, Birmingham

At my age – I'm a proud 56 years – I'll happily take any compliments I can get! Life's too short to analyse whether the praise is genuine or not.

**Sarah Whitton**, Manchester

I spend a lot of money, time and effort on my beauty routine so hearing that would be music to my ears. Regardless of whether I am 18 or 88, complimenting a woman on her looks is always welcome.

**Beth Little**, Woking

I don't mind being told that I look good for my age, but why mention age at all? I'm a young looking and feeling 62 but I don't need to be reminded of that.

**Fionnuala Bennett**, Norfolk

By Shereen Low, **Pictures:** Getty, Instagram

## THIS WEEK Bella LOVES… Crosstown doughnuts

It's all treats and no tricks at Crosstown this Halloween with their wickedly delicious trio. Choose from Spooky Spider (sinisterly sweet pumpkin and dulce de leche), Matcha Mummy (hauntingly green tea) or Mummified Raspberry with compote. These frightfully yummy treats, £5.95 each or six for £29.95, are available from 16 October at Crosstown stores or crosstown.co.uk

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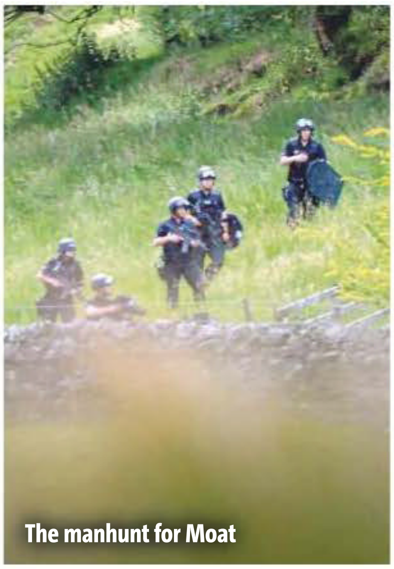
# 'My twin was shot an blinded by Raoul Mo – but his legacy lives

## As a new documentary examines the events behind killer Raoul Moat's murderous rampage, his victim PC David Rathband's identical twin brother Darren talks about the family's enduring trauma 15 years on

On 29 February 2012, Darren Rathband was told the tragic news that his twin brother, David, had died by suicide. David, who had worked as a police officer for Northumbria Police, had been a victim of Raoul Moat who had gone on a shooting rampage after being released from prison. David had been shot in the face and left permanently blind by Moat on 4 July 2010. Unable to cope with his injuries and the breakdown of his marriage, David fell into a deep depression and took his own life a year and a half later.

Now, in a new documentary, *Raoul Moat, Inside the Mind of a Killer,* Darren opens up about his twin. Darren, 57, remembers breaking down in front of work colleagues. He says, 'When I heard he'd died, I just wailed. I was holding files and dropped them all. I wailed like a baby and crawled under a desk.'

Raoul Moat



The manhunt for Moat

David was the older twin by just two a half minutes but, according to Darren, he was still the typical 'older brother' who he looked up to. When they were older, David joined the police force. Darren says, 'David was accepted by Northumbria Police – he was beside himself. He'd finally made it. He'd fulfilled his dream.' David moved from his home in the Midlands to the North East and settled down with wife Kath and their two children, Ashley and Mia. Darren emigrated to Australia but the pair remained close and in regular contact.

'He was the older brother'

But then in July 2010, tragedy struck. Raoul Moat, a former bouncer who had a violent history, had just been released from prison in Durham after serving an 18-week sentence for assaulting a nine-year-old family member. During his time inside, Moat hoped to get back together with his ex-girlfriend, Samantha Stobbart, with whom he had a daughter. But Samantha was terrified of Moat and to keep him away, had lied and told him her new boyfriend, Christopher Brown, was a Northumbria police officer.

Moat, who already had a longstanding hatred of the police, got hold of a shotgun and in the early hours of 3 July, he shot 29 year old Christopher dead outside Samantha's house. Moments later, he reloaded the gun and shot Samantha twice through the front window, injuring her in the arm and stomach. Moat then went on the run and declared war on the police.

In the early hours of 4 July, David was sitting in his patrol car

# d at on’

Darren in the documentary

PC David Rathband was shot and blinded

at a roundabout on the A1 and A69 near East Denton, Newcastle, when he was blasted in the face at close range by Moat. David was rushed to hospital in a critical condition. Moat went into hiding in rural Northumberland, sparking one of the UK’s biggest ever manhunts. Hundreds of armed police searched for him and there was wide media coverage.

Moat left threatening letters and even phoned the police and news outlets, taunting them. The police issued warnings to officers not to patrol alone, and many local residents were told to stay indoors. Moat reportedly used disguises to enable him to get supplies and had some help from associates who were later arrested and convicted for assisting an offender.

On 9 July, 2010, police cornered Moat near a riverbank in Rothbury after reports from locals and surveillance intelligence. Moat was found hiding in undergrowth with a sawn-off shotgun and heavily armed officers and negotiators attempted to persuade him to surrender.

A bizarre moment occurred during the stand-off when former footballer Paul Gascoigne, also known as Gazza, arrived at the police cordon with a fishing rod, chicken, a dressing gown, and beer. Gascoigne told reporters he was a friend of Moat’s and wanted to try to help negotiate with him but police declined. After a tense six-hour stand-off, Moat shot himself and later died in hospital.

Darren flew over from Australia to see his twin who had been left blinded in both eyes and also had hundreds of pieces of shrapnel in his face, leaving him in constant agony. Darren says, ‘I remember being told to prepare myself, that David didn’t look pretty. My initial feeling was he’s alright. I could hear his voice, he’s alive. But that changed pretty quickly – I heard him coming back up the corridor and as I looked towards the door I could see his hand feeling a doorway. I broke down. He couldn’t see and couldn’t even walk through a door without reaching out. I looked at him and thought, *he’s broken*.’

## ‘I thought, he’s broken’

But David proclaimed himself lucky to be alive and, once discharged from hospital, 22 days after the shooting, he threw himself into charity work. He was unable to return to operational police work but, with the help of Darren, just weeks after the shooting, he started the Blue Lamp Foundation, a charity which helps raise much needed funds for injured emergency service workers and continues to this day. Darren says, ‘I knew he was going to need something. It drove David and he was busy. While you’re busy, you’re not thinking about where you should be, what you’ve lost.’

David went on to run the London Marathon and attended the Pride of Britain awards. But as the months passed, as David continued to try and come to terms with his injuries, his marriage ended, and he became depressed. Darren recalls, ‘He had all the symptoms of somebody suffering PTSD – anxiety, shortness of breath, increased heart rate. He said that he had “visits” from Moat and that they were so real that he said wouldn’t be able to sleep again. And he was in constant pain from the hundreds of pieces of shrapnel that had stayed in his face.’

Darren describes what he didn’t realise would be the last time he saw his twin when David visited him in Australia. He says, ‘He told me what he needed me to do to look after his kids. He said he loved me and I said he’d been the best big brother. His reply was, “I love you, Darren. You are also the best brother.”’

In February 2012, 20 months after he was shot by Moat, David took his own life. He was found by police officers who had broken into his home – music was playing from his phone. Darren says, ‘My brother was my admiration. I wanted to be just like him. I’m not who I was before. The sun’s in my face and I look behind but there’s no shadow. You’re missing something.

‘People still remember his generosity, his empathy and compassion. The perpetrator came out of prison, decided to shoot people. David got shot and decided to run a charity. Surely we all have a moral compass and David’s remained in the right direction.’

● *Raoul Moat, Inside the Mind of a Killer, Amazon Prime, 12 October*

By Helen Garston **Pictures:** Amazon Prime, Shutterstock

# Dear Kate...

Counsellor Kate Medlin answers your personal, sexual and emotional problems

## Why should I have strangers at my wedding?

**Q My mum has a new boyfriend. One of many she's had over the years. I'm getting married in a couple of months, and she's asked if her new boyfriend's adult kids can come to the wedding. My fiancé and I have never met them. Plus, we don't even know if they'll still be together by that time as my mum falls in and out of love all the time. Most of her past boyfriends have been pretty awful and I wouldn't even want my fiancé to meet them, never mind the rest of his family! We have had a couple of cancellations, so it's not like we don't have room for them, but why would I want perfect strangers at my wedding? I haven't even met this boyfriend yet as they've only been together a couple of months! To be honest, I gave up trying to get to know any of her partners because she changes them so often. My mum is accusing me of being difficult and says it's causing arguments between her and her boyfriend. How is any of that my fault?**

A It sounds to me like this isn't just about the wedding and who is or isn't invited. In your unedited letter, you paint a more detailed picture of your mum and how you never felt like she put you first. How her relationships with one man after another seemed to you to be all that mattered to her. This left you feeling like you were never at the top of her list of priorities. Like what you wanted and needed weren't important to her. Once again, she is choosing to care more about what some bloke wants than about what you need. This is so hard for you as growing up not only did you not get cared for properly, but you had to always think about what she wanted. And now she's asking you to do the same again. Not being mothered

## Am I just not cut out for motherhood?

**Q I had my kids in my early 40s. They are now three and four. I run my own business, and my husband is a stay-at-home dad who takes care of them during the day, so in the evenings and weekends, I take over. Bedtime is when my patience wears thin the most. I am exhausted, and they are so demanding! Crying if I don't give them another story even if I've already read them several, always stalling going to bed. I feel so angry that they are robbing me of my 'me time'. I don't get much of it and they are so needy! How do other working mothers cope? I feel like I'm failing.**

A Motherhood is hard and can often leave us feeling like we've spread ourselves so thin that we are failing in all areas of our life. Some women who become mothers a little later in life can find it more difficult to shift into parenthood because they've had more time to really work out what they want from life. They've got more to give up. Parenthood is relentless. There are no weekends off, no annual leave. Having two kids under five is exhausting, but even though it feels never-ending, this phase will pass and their relentless need for you will lessen. You're not failing, you're just dealing with a part of life that's really hard!

## He knew and never told me!

**Q My husband had an affair when our kids were 19 and 17. My son had known about it and never told me. My daughter didn't know and was disgusted with her dad. We moved out and my son stayed with his dad. I haven't seen him since. That was five years ago. I want to have a relationship with my son, but feel that he needs to apologise. I don't need the same from his father because I don't want him in my life. But my son will always be my son. How do I get an apology so that we can all move on?**

A I understand that you felt betrayed by your son for not telling you about his dad's affair. However, I feel that it's a little unfair to place the blame at his feet. Kids who learn about a parent's secret can often feel a great burden. It's a heavy weight to carry to imagine that if you reveal what you know, you will be dropping a bomb on the entire family. It wasn't his secret or his responsibility to tell you. If anything, perhaps it is you who owes him an apology for blaming

Letters and replies may be edited for length/clarity. **Pictures:** Getty, Shutterstock

Write to **Dear Kate**,
Bella, The Lantern,
75 Hampstead Road,
London, NW1 2PL, or email
**bella.advice@bauermedia.co.uk**.

Kate will attempt to respond to as many letters as possible through her page

by one's own mother is painful. And when those feelings are triggered, as they are by this wedding situation, all those feelings from the past come flooding forward to the present. You are not being unreasonable to not want people you've never met at your wedding. And she is gaslighting you by telling you that you're causing problems between her and her boyfriend. However, if you're worried that she will cause more problems if you stick to your guns, you could find a compromise. Like asking to meet with her boyfriend and his kids so that you aren't inviting complete strangers to your wedding. If for any reason this doesn't happen, at least you can say that you tried to meet them half way. Alternatively, you can choose to stand your ground in the knowledge that you are now a grown up who is more in control of her own life, and can make decisions that aren't automatically in the best interests of your mum.

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him for his father's sins. He was probably tortured by knowing what he knew. Only if you're prepared to eat a large slice of humble pie, can you even think about making amends.

**BELLA ADVICE LINES**

Do you suffer from anxiety?
**0906 652 5070**

Getting over depression?
**0906 652 5076**

Bereavement
**0906 652 5077**

Impotence
**0906 652 5078**

Relationship breakdown
**0906 652 5079**

Calls cost 65p per minute plus your network access charge. Calls last approximately four minutes. You must be over 18 to call and have the bill payer's permission. UK SP: Spoke 0333 202 3390

# Horoscopes

By Jane Struthers **For the week 14–20 Octobe**

Davina McCall – 58 on 16 October

## ARIES

**21 March – 20 April**

Take it gently this week because relationships will be testing. Early on, emotional outbursts will lead to ill feeling if you allow yourself to be sucked into the intense atmosphere. The 18th is good for taking a dispassionate and practical view of what's going on.

**Theme of the week: Keep your cool**

☎ 0906 650 7230

## TAURUS

**21 April – 21 May 2025**

Although you don't want to seem hard-hearted if a certain person is hoping to win your sympathy, on the 17th you're reluctant to let them run rings around you. Surrounding yourself with some of your favourite people gladdens your heart on the 19th.

**Theme of the week: Doing your duty**

☎ 0906 650 7231

## GEMINI

**22 May – 21 June**

The accent is on enjoyment in the first half of the week, when you're happiest doing the things you love. It's a wonderful opportunity to let someone know how important they are to you. Your brain is as sharp as a razor on the 20th.

**Theme of the week: Generosity**

☎ 0906 650 7232

## CANCER

**22 June – 23 July**

Try to resist the temptation to put you-know-who on a pedestal at the start of the week. You're confident about how to deal with an important family matter on the 17th but don't assume that it's only you who has all the answers.

**Theme of the week: Home turf**

☎ 0906 650 7233

## LEO

**24 July – 23 August**

What a week! So much is going on that you'll barely catch your breath. It's nice to be so busy but by midweek you reach the point of needing some time to relax by yourself. Grab this opportunity for a break because the pace picks up again on the 20th.

**Theme of the week: Socialising**

☎ 0906 650 7234

## VIRGO

**24 August – 23 September**

Familiarity breeds boredom midweek, particularly where tedious rules are concerned. You long to stage a mini revolt to show your dissatisfaction. Find positive ways to let off steam, otherwise you'll direct all your irritation towards other people on the 18th.

**Theme of the week: Self-restraint**

☎ 0906 650 7235

## LIBRA

**24 September – 23 October**

You're brimming with confidence on the 17th, which is perfect if you've got to rise to a challenge and want to give it your very best. You exude charm and charisma on the 19th, so expect lots of compliments to come your way.

**Theme of the week: Chutzpah**

☎ 0906 650 7236

## SCORPIO

**24 October – 22 November**

Taking a back seat from life every now and then does you good this week. It's not that you're feeling lazy or antisocial, more that you need to pace yourself and not burn up too much energy in one go. This tactic definitely pays off on the 19th.

**Theme of the week: Boundaries**

☎ 0906 650 7237

## SAGITTARIUS

**23 November – 21 December**

Being realistic about one of your friends will protect you from a lot of disappointment in the future. Stand up for yourself in a discussion about domestic plans on the 18th if you aren't happy with what's being proposed.

**Theme of the week: Wheels within wheels**

☎ 0906 650 7238

## CAPRICORN

**22 December – 20 January**

You're powerfully motivated to get ahead at the moment, especially in projects that will improve your reputation or boost your career. If this involves self-promotion it's highly likely that you'll feel slightly uncomfortable about it on the 17th.

**Theme of the week: Reservations**

☎ 0906 650 7239

## AQUARIUS

**21 January – 19 February**

Right now you're being carried along on a lovely wave of optimism, and you feel especially cheerful this week. It's great for meeting up with some of the people you care about and it's also good for any kind of jaunt.

**Theme of the week: Journeys**

☎ 0906 650 7240

## PISCES

**20 February – 20 March**

Misunderstandings over a shared bank account or official financial transaction will need to be unpicked carefully so that you avoid jumping to the wrong conclusions. Remember this on the 19th when crossed wires or scrambled facts are more than likely.

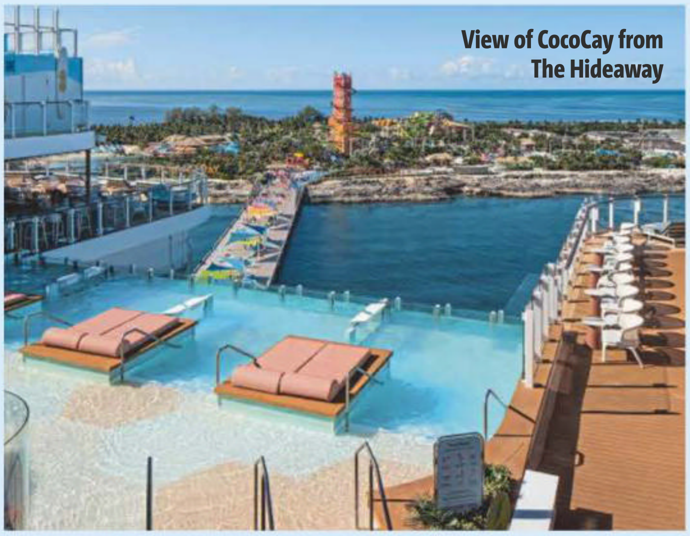
**Theme of the week: Honesty**

☎ 0906 650 7241

For a more detailed weekly forecast call the number for your star sign. Calls cost 65p per minute plus your network access charge. Weekly forecasts last approximately four minutes. Messages are pre-recorded. For entertainment and guidance purposes only. Users must be over 18. Service provider: Spoke. Customer service number 0333 202 3390 (9am-5pm).

# Ultimate family fun

Star of the Seas promises everything you need for a holiday, from incredible food, amazing itineraries and outstanding on-board entertainment



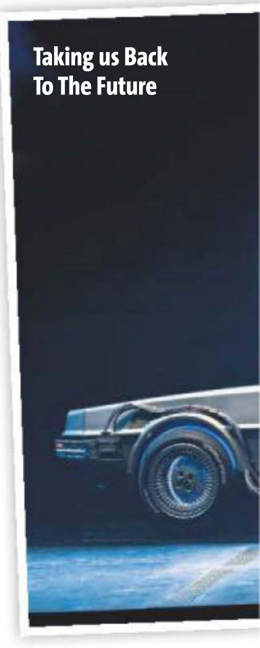
View of CocoCay from The Hideaway

## Neighbourhood watch

From the moment you step on the ship, the experience feels overwhelmingly magical. You're greeted by The Pearl, a shimmering installation that helps you navigate around the ship – and is a great meeting point if you get lost!

There are multiple themed neighbourhoods, offering something for everyone. Surfside is home to the largest waterpark at sea, with some epic waterslides that had us literally squealing with glee. We loved the chilled vibes of Central Park, with its lush greenery and upscale dining, and The Hideaway is an adults-only area featuring an infinity pool and live DJ sets.

Despite its size – 20 decks, 5,610 passengers and seven swimming pools – the ship is easy to find your way around thanks to clear deck plans at every lift.



Taking us Back To The Future

Icon And Star Park: iconic

## Why go?

After launching the worlds' biggest cruise ship last year, Royal Caribbean has just added another gigantic cruise ship to its Icon class fleet. Star of the Seas sails from Port Canaveral, Florida to the east and west Caribbean, stopping at St Kitts, Mexico, Honduras and the private island Perfect Day at CocoCay.

With the third vessel, Legend of the Seas, launching next year and sailing from Rome and Barcelona, we hopped aboard the Star to discover why this is being branded as the ultimate family holiday.

Kids will love Surfside

## Kids' corner

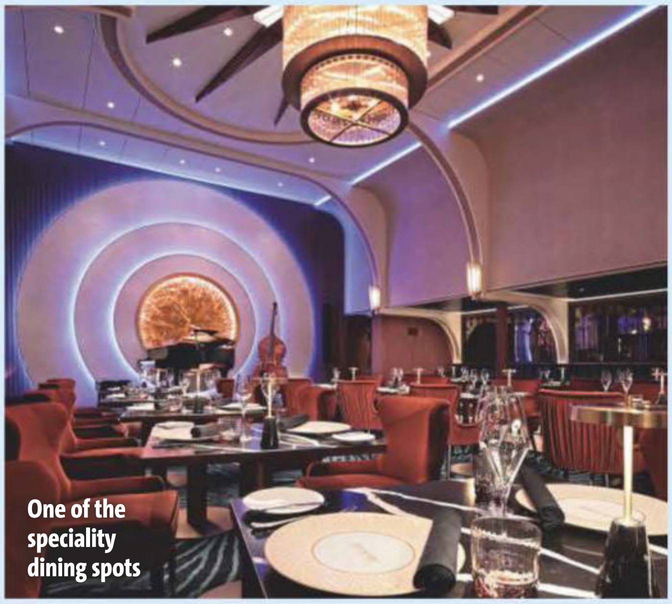
The kaleidoscopic Surfside neighbourhood is a paradise for little ones, while older kids can have their own independence thanks to Social020 hang out, where you'll find gaming stations and a movie theatre, which even our teen approved of. The ship operates a 1am curfew for kids and there's a tracking app for ages three to 12 and a kids' club to allow them some freedom (and you some 'me' time). We stayed in an Infinite Balcony room, with spectacular ocean views and a clever design that maximises space. When the balcony is closed, it becomes part of the indoor living area, giving you extra room to relax in. It sleeps up to four guests and features a cosy seating area with a sofa, loads of storage for your cruise outfits, and a surprisingly spacious bathroom.

## Food & drink

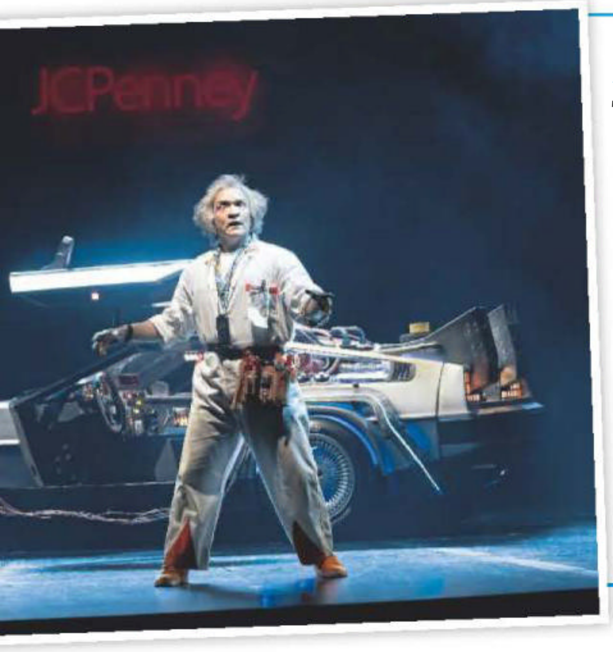
We were blown away by the range of food and drink on board, from casual bites to fine dining. The Windjammer Café's buffet-style meals catered to all tastes, while the Pearl Café was perfect for a quiet coffee and pastry as we planned our day.

One of our favourite spots was the Aquadome Market, a global food hall – ideal for a post-swim snack. The speciality restaurants really stood out, too. Izumi in the Park serves excellent sushi, and Coastal Kitchen offers incredible steak and views.

The bar scene was just as exciting. We loved sipping fizz at Bubbles Bar and enjoying coffee cocktails at Rye & Bean while taking in the ocean views. You can really experience something different each night.



One of the speciality dining spots



## Entertainment

The crew has taken the entertainment on board to the next level. Our highlight was the west end-style production of *Back To The Future* in the impressive two-level theatre, and the jaw-dropping Torque show in the Aquadome features jaw-dropping dives and aerial stunts.

The Duelling Pianos bar was a standout night, with two pianists battling it out while taking audience requests. Sports fans will enjoy Playmakers Sports Bar, where we caught a live Premier League match in a really great atmosphere, and we also enjoyed the Music Hall, where we rocked out to an energetic cover band.

Both on and off board, this will be a holiday experience you will never forget!

## NEED TO KNOW

- Seven nights on board costs from £968 per person, depending on stateroom, the time of year, itinerary and which food and drink package you opt for.
- We flew from London Gatwick to Orlando with Norse, from £230 depending on the time of year. It is approximately 1 hour transfer to Port Canaveral, Florida, for embarkation.
- The third Icon class ship, Legend of the Seas, launches next year and sails from Barcelona and Rome. Visit royalcaribbean.com for more information and to book.

By Hayley Merrick. **Pictures:** Instagram

# TV WEEK

## Be Your Own Boss

**Sunday 19 October, ITV1**

Packed with inspiring advice and emotional transformations, this new series sees Holly Tucker MBE, small business queen and co-founder of Not on the High Street, head up her first show. Holly uses her wisdom and enthusiasm to help UK entrepreneurs take their side hustles to new heights. Heading into kitchens, sheds and workshops across the country, she gives struggling founders her trademark pep talks as well as practical advice. 'We need to have a business show with kindness at its heart,' says Holly. 'They didn't need to be taken down, they needed a highlight of what they do know.'

## HARLAN COBEN'S LAZARUS

**Wednesday 22 October, Prime Video**

Harlan Coben returns with a twisty new thriller starring Sam Claflin and Bill Nighy, which is every bit as dark, gripping and binge-worthy as we've come to expect. After the sudden death of his father, Joel Lazarus (Claflin) returns home only to be sucked into a chilling web of cold-case murders, old secrets and disturbing family mysteries. Each episode heaps on the intrigue as reality blurs and the past refuses to stay buried. Coben's trademark cliffhangers are present and correct, and the performances sizzle. If you love your drama suspenseful and packed with gasp-out-loud moments, you're in for a treat.

## The Pride of Britain Awards

**Thursday 23 October, ITV1**

One of the most uplifting nights on TV is back! Hosted by the ever-glamorous Carol Vorderman and Ashley Banjo, the Awards celebrate the nation's everyday heroes, those astonishing individuals whose courage, kindness and spirit leave us awe-struck. Expect the red carpet to be packed with A-listers, but the true stars are the ordinary people achieving the extraordinary: from life-saving kids to selfless community champions, every story is a tearjerker. 'There were around 100,000 nominations this year, which was quite colossal and made judging difficult,' says Carol. 'It shows with all of the turbulence in the world, people recognise goodness even more.'

**By** Caroline Blight, Amber Connolly and Amy Rowland

TV timings are subject to change

# Leonard and Hungry Paul

**Monday 20 October, BBC2**

Need a little soul-soothing telly? Look no further than this gentle, feel-good show narrated by Julia Roberts. In the warm and witty story, we follow the trials and tribulations of board-game mad friends Leonard (Alex Lawther) and Hungry Paul (Laurie Kynaston) who navigate the highs and lows of adulthood in their suburban backdrop setting. 'It's about kindness, generosity and the everyday things in life. Sharing experiences with friends, connecting with people, and appreciating small moments is vital. It's funny, heartbreaking, strange, charming and beautiful. I hope audiences laugh, cry, and recognise themselves in these characters,' says Laurie.

# JOE SWASH: BRITAIN'S YOUNG DADS

**Monday 20 October, BBC Three**

Joe Swash turns the spotlight on an unsung group of heroes in this revealing documentary. Drawing on his own experiences as a young dad, Joe hears the stories of men who are rewriting the fatherhood script and challenging stereotypes. 'We don't often hear from, or talk about, young dads in the UK,' says Joe. 'It's been eye-opening to meet the young men behind the statistics. The ones working hard to create a good future for their kids. I feel lucky that we've been able to help tell their stories and hopefully we can get people thinking a bit differently about young dads.'

# THE RIDGE

**Thursday 23 October, BBC2**

Mia (Lauren Lyle), a woman fleeing demons, arrives in New Zealand for a family wedding, only to discover her sister is dead and sinister secrets are swirling in the shadows. Soon, grief and suspicion collide as Mia is drawn ever closer to her late sister's enigmatic fiancé (Jay Ryan). The longer she spends in the close-knit community, the more she realises everyone is hiding something and tension threatens to overwhelm the town. And Lauren loved the chance to return to New Zealand, 'My dad got a job out there when I was younger, it was such an amazing place to be,' she says.

# NEW THIS WEEK

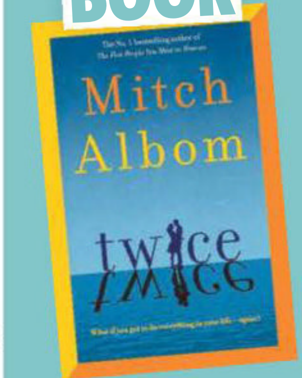
## FILM Roofman

Former Army Ranger and struggling father Jeffrey turns to robbing McDonald's restaurants by cutting holes in their roofs, gaining him the nickname 'Roofman'. After escaping prison, he secretly lives inside a Toys 'R' Us for six months, surviving undetected while adopting a new identity and planning his next move. But when he falls for Leigh, an employee and divorced mum who's drawn to his charisma, Jeffrey's double life begins to unravel. Based on a true story.

## EVENT London Never Dies

London Cabaret Club's latest production welcomes us into the world of 007, featuring tuxedoes, femme fatales, immersive sets and cocktails shaken, not stirred. The glamorous night out includes a three-course meal, thrilling performances and an after party for when the curtain falls. Get dressed up and experience an espionage fix – as speculation swirls around who will play the next Bond. Book tickets at thelondoncabaretclub.com

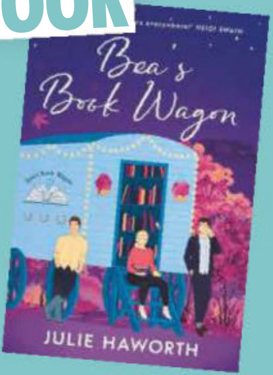
## BOOK Twice



**by Mitch Albom (Sphere)**

Alfie Logan discovers he has the magical ability to get a second chance at everything. As Alfie grows, he uses his gift to fix mistakes, take risks and navigate love. He falls for Gianna, and believes he's found true happiness – until temptation tests him and Alfie learns a painful truth: once love is undone, it can't be reclaimed, and he makes a choice that changes his life forever... Emotional, thought-provoking and deeply romantic, we adored this gorgeous story from the author of *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*.

## BOOK Bea's Book Wagon



**By Julie Haworth (Simon&Schuster)**

After impulsively quitting her dead-end temp job and investing her life savings in a ramshackle old horsebox, Bea sets about turning her dream of running a bookshop into a reality, and opens Bea's Book Wagon. But it's not all smooth sailing, and as Bea struggles with the challenges of running her own small business, she can only hope that her love of literature and the power of reading can help transform the lives of her friends, her community and herself in the process. A heartwarming read!

# ‘It’s powerful supporting a male-dom

Eleanor plays dressmaker Louisa

Millie as Irene

Victorian England never looked so stylish, or so scandalous, as it does in *The Forsytes.* Full of forbidden love and strong women, the series follows the powerful Forsyte family as tradition, social ambition, and long-buried secrets threaten to tear them apart. At the heart of the drama are two women navigating society on their own terms – graceful dancer Irene, pursued by the determined Soames Forsyte (Joshua Orpin) and fiercely independent Louisa, whose hidden past with cousin Jolyon (Danny Griffin) threatens to upend the family. We caught up with stars Millie Gibson (Irene) and Eleanor Tomlinson (Louisa) to find out more…

**Millie, tell us about Irene. What makes her stand out in the world of *The Forsytes*?**

**Millie Gibson:** Irene is described as ethereal in the script. She’s a ballet dancer and comes from quite a bohemian background, having lived in Paris. There’s a real youthfulness and fire to her. She’s optimistic by nature, speaks fluent French, and is just so different from what Soames, and indeed the rest of the Forsytes, are used to. That difference is both magnetic and, for some, a little bit scandalous.

> ‘There are secrets on the way’

**Ballet dancers were seen as controversial figures in that era. How did you prepare to take on that side of Irene?**

**Millie:** Absolutely, ballet was a bit shocking in Victorian society because of the costumes and how the dancers moved. For the show, I had loads of ballet lessons before filming. My first ever ballet scene was where Soames imagines Irene on stage and there was a lot to learn, but being coached by the Royal Ballet team was just incredible. They made me feel so comfortable.

**Irene quickly captures Soames’s imagination. How does their relationship develop in this adaptation?**

**Millie:** In this version, we actually see how Irene and Soames fall in love before their relationship unravels, which is different to previous adaptations. Soames wants to be her hero at first, but Irene is definitely no damsel in distress. She tries to draw out his tenderness, but then you see as his possessiveness grows, the marriage suffers. At first, you

# to see women each other in inated world'

Soames and Irene's relationship is complicated

## Millie Gibson and Eleanor Tomlinson open up about their glamorous new period drama, *The Forsytes*

really want them to work, and it's so interesting for the audience to experience that shift with them.

**Eleanor, Louisa is a new character for this version of *The Forsytes* so what drew you to her?**

**Eleanor Tomlinson:** Louisa is fascinating. She came to England from Ireland, worked as a lady's maid, and built her own dressmaking business. She's so strong and fiercely independent.

Joshua Orpin and Danny Griffin

**Would you say *The Forsytes* is a romantic drama at its core?**

**Eleanor:** Romance is central to almost every storyline, especially for Louisa, who's forced to confront the great love of her life all over again. She's true to herself and incredibly loyal, but there are white lies and secrets along the way to protect her children. Seeing Jolyon again asks big questions about love and honesty; it's about testing loyalties and choosing who you really are.

**Millie, how does Irene relate to the wider Forsyte family?**

**Millie:** The family don't expect Irene to be the way she is because Soames is so reserved and she's his opposite. But she makes an impression, she lights up the room, and I love that line when Ann, the matriarch, says 'the Carteret girl was too obvious for Soames'. Irene really holds her ground from the start.

She also finds a true friend in June; they have the same spirit and sense of adventure, seeing themselves as outsiders within that family.

**Eleanor, Louisa also carves out her own space in society. How important is her friendship with Ellen Parker Barrington (Josette Simon)?**

**Eleanor:** Their relationship is really special. Ellen has been a key supporter, helping Louisa's dressmaking business find its place in high society. It's powerful to see women supporting each other, especially in such a male-dominated world.

**Fashion is central to both your characters. Did the costumes help you get into role?**

**Millie:** Absolutely. Before Irene marries Soames, her costumes are elegant but simple, which I love. Nic Ede's costume designs reflect Irene's journey; my favourite was the blue dress for the proposal scene. After marriage, her style becomes more elaborate – patterns and details that show her changing status.

**Eleanor:** I worked with Nic Ede years ago, so it was wonderful to team up again. Louisa's clothes are more practical with vintage and block prints, just right for her role as a creative force. Making her costumes feel authentic, even having a pincushion on her wrist like a real dressmaker, helped so much with building the character.

**What should viewers expect from *The Forsytes*?**

**Millie:** Plenty of romance, heartbreak, and a real exploration of complicated marriages.

**Eleanor:** Secrets, drama, and unforgettable women, on both sides of the camera!

● *The Forsytes, Monday 20 October, 5*

By Cecile Metcalf Pictures 5

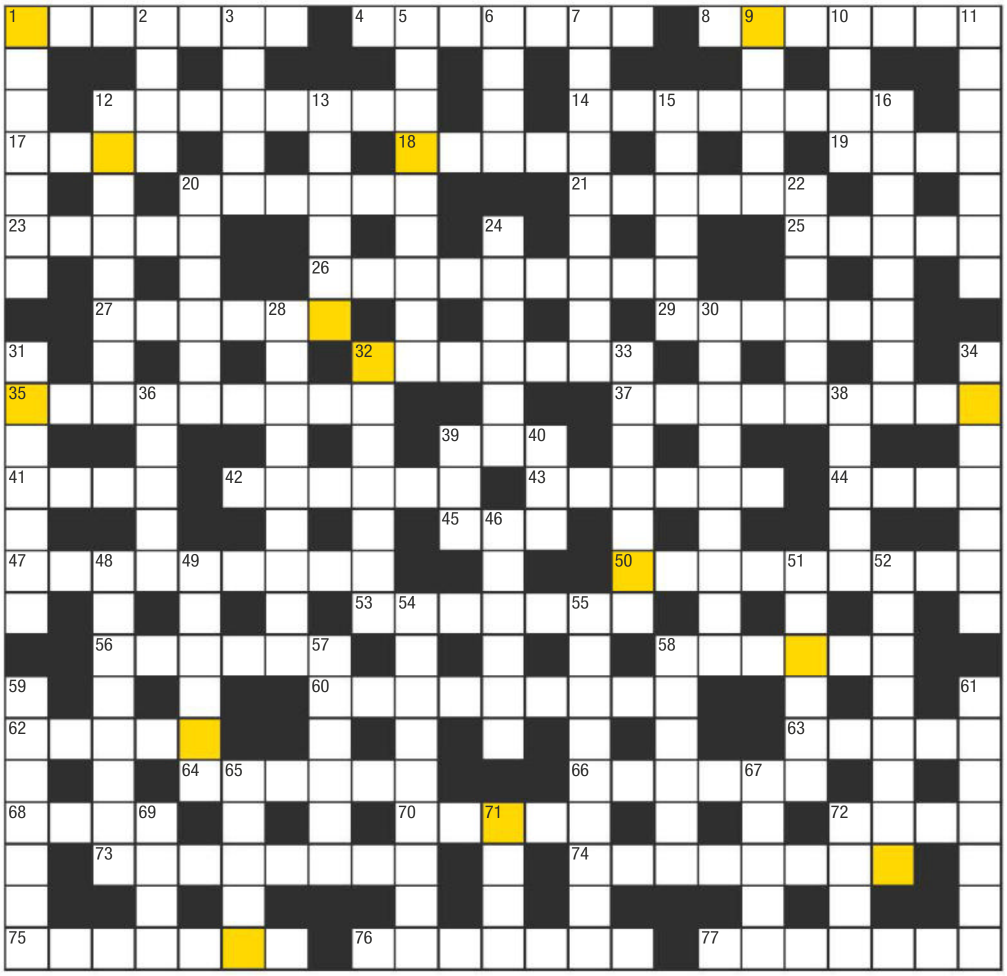
# Puzzles

**YOU could be in with a chance of winning £200**

## PRIZE crossword

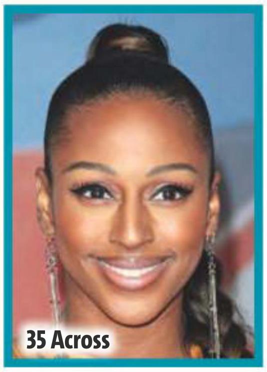
**WIN £200**

Solve the crossword to find, reading from top to bottom in the shaded squares, the name of an actress and comedy star. This is your competition entry answer. See the 'How to enter' panel, below right.



## Across

**1** Glamorous US soap in which Joan Collins played Alexis Carrington Colby (7)
**4** Solvent used as a nail polish remover (7)
**8** Unhappiness (7)
**12** James Bond film, *- - - Are Forever* (8)
**14** Sitcom which starred Jennifer Saunders and Joanna Lumley, *Absolutely - - -* (8)
**17** Smile – like the Cheshire Cat? (4)
**18** Relish, or impudence (5)

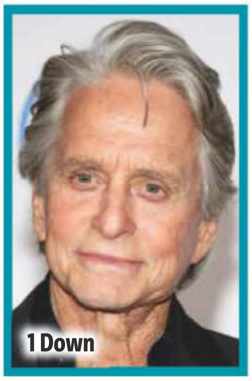


35 Across

**19** Wound mark (4)
**20** Starter (6)
**21** TV presenting puppet who rose to fame in the Eighties alongside pal Kevin the Gerbil, - - - Rat (6)
**23** Roger - - -, Fred Thursday in *Endeavour* (5)
**25** Glowing coal (5)
**26** State of being unidentified, anagram of MAYO TINNY (9)
**27** Ship's kitchen (6)
**29** - - - Coughlan, *Derry Girls* and *Bridgerton* actress (6)
**32** Sporty Spice, - - - C (7)
**35** - - - Burke, singer and stage star, pictured below left (9)
**37** Robinson Crusoe's island companion (3,6)
**39** US city, - - - Angeles (3)
**41** Thread, or tale (4)
**42** Athens' country (6)
**43** - - - borealis, northern lights (6)
**44** Song for two (4)
**45** Viper (3)
**47** Songbird, anagram of HOT STANCE (9)
**50** Cosmetic used to hide blemishes (9)
**53** Greed (7)
**56** Customer (6)
**58** Taylor Swift song, *You - - - With Me* (6)
**60** Fine album by David Bowie? (5,4)
**62** Wild West skills show (5)
**63** Des'ree song from 1994, *You - - - Be* (5)
**64** Take away (6)
**66** Shortage, scarcity (6)
**68** Beach grains (4)
**70** Colorado ski resort (5)
**72** God of love (4)
**73** Aromatic herb used to make Béarnaise sauce (8)
**74** Example, case (8)
**75** Clothes for washing (7)
**76** Tanned animal hide (7)
**77** Nuts used to make marzipan (7)

## Down

**1** Michael - - -, Oscar-winning actor, pictured below right (7)
**2** Similar (to) (4)
**3** Shakespeare play, *- - - Of Athens* (5)
**5** Stew-like dish (9)
**6** Soya bean curd (4)
**7** Ancient Egyptian queen (9)
**9** Narnia lion (5)
**10** 'We' in France have common sense! (4)
**11** Cook in a wok (4-3)
**12** Two-way chat (8)
**13** Oslo's country (6)
**15** Scarlett Johansson costume drama, *The Other - - - Girl* (6)
**16** Sword sheath (8)
**20** Daenerys in *GOT*, - - - Clarke (6)
**22** Scenic route? (6)
**24** Former stage name of magician Steven Frayne (6)
**28** Happy hormone? (9)
**30** '- - - is bliss', saying (9)
**31** Caribbean music genre (7)
**32** Dark purplish-red colour (7)
**33** Hug and kiss (7)
**34** *The - - - Of Edwin Drood*, Dickens's unfinished novel (7)
**36** Gaseous element with the symbol Xe (5)
**38** - - - Fisher, *MasterChef* narrator (5)
**39** Meadow (3)
**40** Tree fluid (3)
**46** Uses an aerosol (6)
**48** Countries of the West, anagram of CITED CON (8)
**49** Magazine boss (6)
**51** Depeche Mode classic, *Just Can't Get - - -* (6)
**52** Tourniquet (8)
**54** Retribution, retaliation (9)
**55** Ecstatic, on - - - (5,4)
**57** Large crowd of people (6)
**58** Road avoiding a town centre (6)
**59** Port and city in SW England (7)
**61** Muhammad Ali's birth name, - - - Clay (7)
**65** Mistake (5)
**67** *On The - - - Of The Lonesome Pine*, song associated with Laurel and Hardy (5)
**69** Sunrise (4)
**71** Star of *F1*, Brad - - - (4)
**72** Reflected sound (4)



1 Down

**Crossword** Neil Locker. **Pictures** Shutterstock

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# Sudoku

Fill in the blank squares with the numbers 1 to 9 so that each row, each column and each smaller 3x3 block contains all the numbers from 1 to 9.

**EASY**

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 7 | | 5 | | | |
| 8 | 4 | | 2 | | | | 3 | 9 |
| 5 | | 6 | | | | | | 2 |
| 6 | | 2 | | | | | | |
| | | | 6 | | 8 | | | |
| | | | | | | 1 | | 5 |
| 3 | | | | | | 2 | | 7 |
| 2 | 7 | | | | 4 | | 9 | 8 |
| | | | 8 | | 7 | 3 | | |

**HARD**

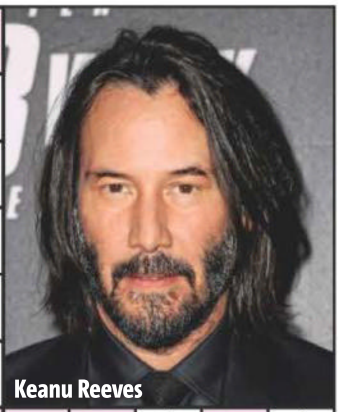
| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 5 | | 6 | | | | | |
| | | | | | 7 | | | 1 |
| | | 1 | 2 | 5 | | 7 | | |
| | 6 | | | | | 8 | | 9 |
| | | 5 | | | | 2 | | |
| 4 | | 9 | | | | | 7 | |
| | | 6 | | 8 | 1 | 5 | | |
| 7 | | | 9 | | | | | |
| | | | | | 4 | | 8 | |

*Take A Break Sudoku* magazine, containing over 80 fun-to-solve puzzles, is on sale now.

WIN £200

# PRIZE Arrowword

Solve the clues, writing your answers in the directions shown by the arrows, to reveal, reading down the shaded squares, the name of the Middle Eastern capital where Keanu Reeves was born. This is your competition entry answer. See the 'How to enter' panel below.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Scottish hillside? | ▼ | Slow to under-stand | Prosecutes | ▼ | Withdrew troops | Inns | ▼ | Flippant, glib | Sacred hymn |  Keanu Reeves | | | | |
| --- Stone, ancient cipher | ▶ | ▼ | ▼ | | | ▼ | | Emotional shock | ▼ | | | | | |
| Border on | ▶ | 🟨 | | | Divisions within a play | ▶ | | ▼ | | | | | | |
| ▶ | | | | | --- Wang, fashion designer | ▶ | 🟨 | | | | | | | |
| Football pundit, --- Crouch | Exploit | ▶ | | | And the rest (2,2) | ▶ | | | | | | | | |
| Sugary | Miserable creature | | Upper cavity of the heart | ▶ | | | | | | | | | | |
| ▶ | ▼ | | | | *Pinch Of* ---, cookbook | ▶ | | | Poetry | Style, flair | Academy Award | ▼ | Beatrix Potter's fox (2,3) | ▼ |
| Period of 10 years | | Stick together | Seaweed jelly | | Urbane | ▶ | | | ▼ | ▼ | Donald Trump's daughter | | Perfect | |
| ▶ | | ▼ | ▼ | | | Sickness | | Evoke | ▶ | | 🟨 ▼ | | ▼ | |
| Duvet rating? | ▶ | | | Crimson | Biggest | ▼ | Boldness | ▶ | | | | | | |
| Silent film star, --- Chaplin | ▶ | | | 🟨 ▼ | ▼ | | | Caught in a trap | ▶ | | | | | |
| ▶ | | | | | | | Terrific | Gooey gunk | | Underwat-er detect-ion system | | Speak, say | | *Would I --- You?*, TV show (3,2) |
| But on the other hand | Catatonia hit, *Road* --- | | Put on clothes | ▶ | | | ▼ | ▼ | Cranium | ▶ ▼ | | ▼ | | ▼ |
| ▶ | ▼ | | Small garden bird | *Asterix The* ---, comic story | ▶ | | 🟨 | | Porridge grain | ▶ | | | Naturally occurring mineral | |
| Great anger | | Posh actor? | ▶ ▼ | | | | | | | | Foot digit | ▶ | ▼ | |
| ▶ | | | | Appear (to be) | ▶ | | | | Warn | ▶ | | | | 🟨 |
| Hideous fruit? | | Dram | ▶ | | | Bring up, raise | ▶ | | | | --- Speed-wagon, band (1,1,1) | ▶ | | |

## SOLUTIONS

Sudoku solutions can be found online now at bellamagazine.co.uk

**ISSUE 39**
**PRIZE ANSWERS**
Crossword
**Norman Reedus**
Arrowword
**Prague**

Full solutions to this week's prize puzzles can be found at bellamagazine.co.uk after the closing date: 27 October 2025

## HOW TO ENTER THE PRIZE COMPETITIONS

**BY PHONE: 0901 130 0237**

When asked for the issue number, key in 41. Calls cost 50p per call, plus your network access charge. (UK readers only.) You must be 18 or over and have the bill payer's permission.

**BY TEXT: 65115**

Text BEL41 then a space followed by your name, house number or name, your postcode, then your answer(s), all separated by a space, to 65115, eg Jane Smith 10 SL5 9JN Answer(s). Texts cost 50p plus your standard network rate. Keep texts under 160 characters or you may be charged for more than one text.

- If you enter after the closing date, you will not be entered but may be charged. Not available in Eire. Please ensure your entry is completed correctly, as incorrect entries may be charged but not entered. This is not a subscription service.
- **You are automatically consenting to receive further communications about these competitions from us via SMS text. You can opt out of this at any time by texting STOP to 65115.** This will be charged at your standard network rate, but you will need to do this each time you enter the competition by text. Your personal data will (regardless of whether you opt out) always be used to process your entry. For further information, see general terms and privacy policy at Bauerdatapromise.co.uk.
- Lines close at 11.59pm on 27 October 2025.

Phone UK SP: Spoke (0333 202 3390). Text SP: Bauer Media. Email smshelp@bauermedia.co.uk or call 0330 159 2525.

**OR ENTER ONLINE:**
Bellamagazine.co.uk

For full solutions and winners' details, visit bellamagazine.co.uk

Continued over the page...

# BITS & PIECES

We've taken a completed crossword puzzle and cut it up to give 24 pieces. Your task is to rebuild the puzzle with the help of the piece that we've already placed in the grid.

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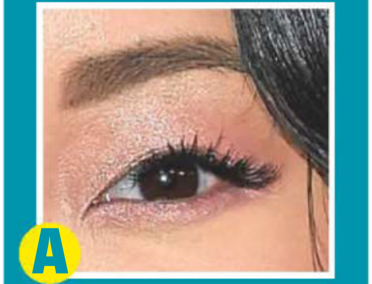
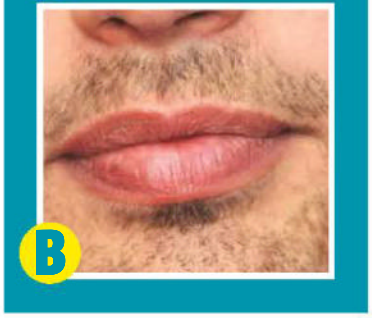
| S | ■ | ■ |

# GUESS THE CELEB

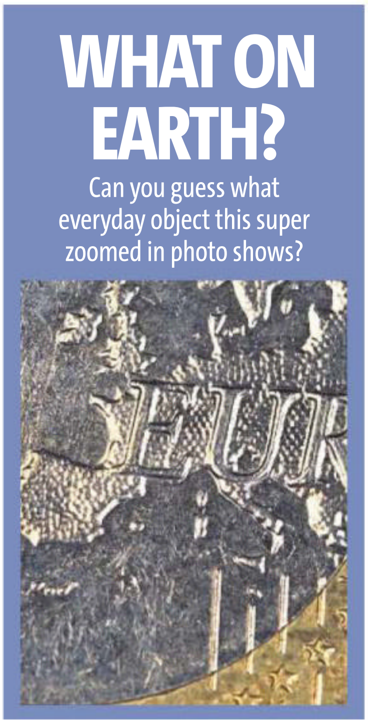
Can you name these stars by seeing close ups of their famous faces?





# WHAT ON EARTH?

Can you guess what everyday object this super zoomed in photo shows?



# ued...

# ROUND SUM

Work out the solution to the sum by following the instructions contained within the arrow.

25

DOUBLE IT

÷10

x9

-5

HALVE IT

+12

÷8

x3

+21

☐

# CELEBRITY CODEBREAKER

When you've solved this puzzle, use the code to transfer the letters to the numbered boxes in the lower grid and reveal the identity of our mystery celebrity.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ■ | 3 | ■ | 2 | 10 | 17 | 9 | 23 | 6 | 11 | 9 | 8 | ■ | 22 | ■ |
| ■ | 1 | ■ | 17 | ■ | ■ | 8 | ■ | 16 | ■ | ■ | 17 | ■ | 25 | ■ |
| 12 | 23 | 23 | 21 | ■ | 22 | 10 | 21 | 6 | 1 | ■ | 5 | 25 | 19 | 4 |
| ■ | 16 | ■ | 14 | ■ | 17 | ■ | ■ | 9 | ■ | ■ | 7 | ■ | 4 | ■ |
| 18 | 10 | 13 | ■ | ■ | 5 | 23 | 16 | 17 | ■ | 23 | ■ | 17 | 24 | 10 |
| 17 | ■ | 17 | 25 | 13 | | | | | | 3 | 17 | 9 | ■ | 20 |
| 20 | ■ | 18 | ■ | 1 | | | | | | 17 | ■ | 9 | ■ | 26 |
| 18 | 10 | 13 | 19 | 10 | | | | | | 15 | 6 | 10 | 9 | 9 |
| 23 | ■ | 9 | ■ | 17 | | | | | | 6 | ■ | 19 | ■ | 17 |
| 1 | ■ | 10 | 9 | 21 | | | | | | 10 | 18 | 10 | ■ | 25 |
| 7 | 25 | 13 | ■ | 8 | ■ | 14 | 23 | 23 | 5 | ■ | ■ | 13 | 17 | 21 |
| ■ | 5 | ■ | 15 | ■ | ■ | 17 | ■ | ■ | 10 | ■ | 2 | ■ | 12 | ■ |
| 21 | 10 | 5 | 6 | ■ | 10 | 1 | 23 | 13 D | 10 | ■ | 23 | 3 | 6 | 11 |
| ■ | 1 | ■ | 17 | ■ | ■ | 19 | ■ | 23 O | ■ | ■ | 25 | ■ | 1 | ■ |
| ■ | 24 | ■ | 13 | 10 | 24 | 10 | 26 | 24 T | 25 | 23 | 5 | ■ | 10 | ■ |

A B C ~~D~~ E F G H I J

K L M N ~~O~~ P Q R S

~~T~~ U V W X Y Z

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | | | | | | | D |
| **14** | **15** | **16** | **17** | **18** | **19** | **20** | **21** | **22** | **23** | **24** | **25** | **26** |
| | | | | | | | | | O | T | | |

| 11 | 10 | 9 | 10 | 5 | 17 | ■ | 19 | 23 | 21 | 10 | 12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | ■ | | | | | |

**Pictures** Shutterstock

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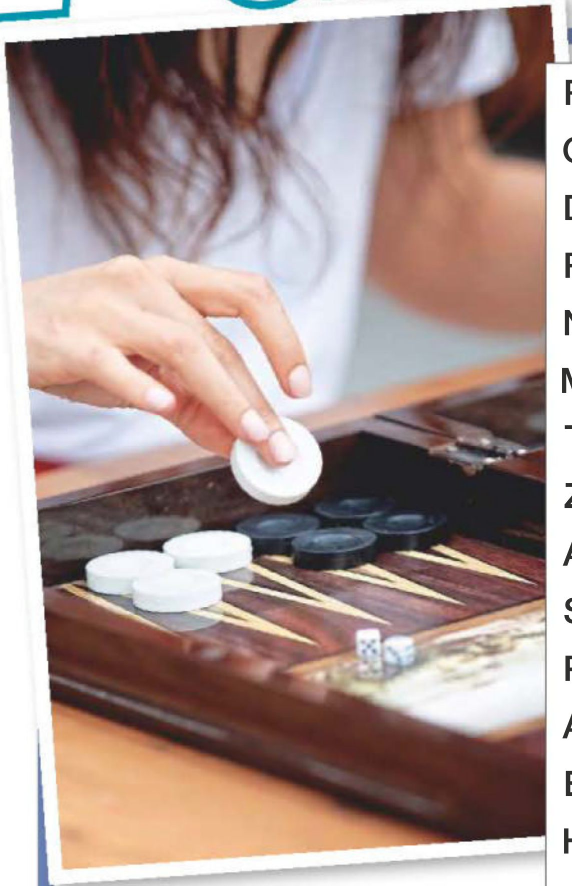


# BOARD OF THE RINGS

The name of the game here is to circle all the backgammon-related words, listed below.

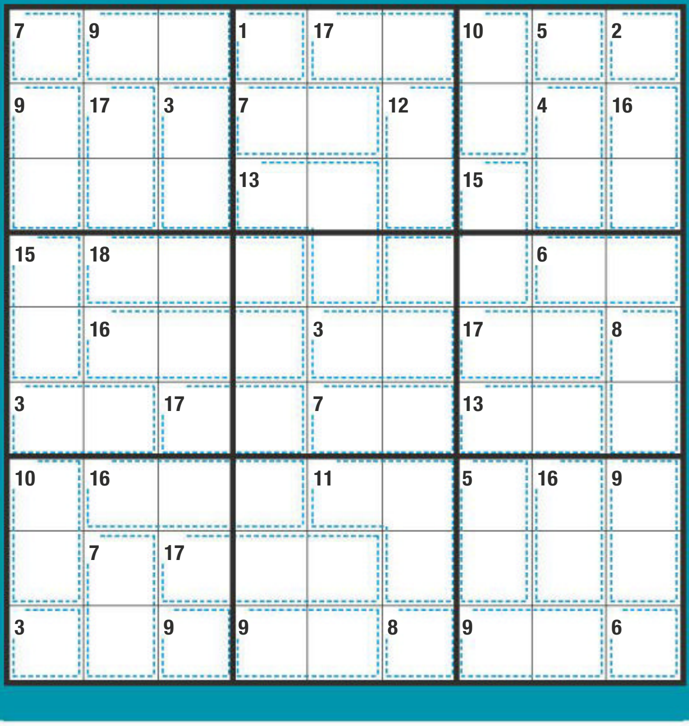
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| R | Y | G | S | L | S | R | U | O | L | O | C | E | X | A | D | U | Z | S |
| O | B | R | N | C | T | H | P | S | A | G | A | M | E | R | O | J | K | P |
| D | R | A | O | B | F | E | A | V | W | E | S | A | C | F | E | I | R | B |
| R | L | R | I | T | L | E | T | K | T | S | I | S | A | S | Q | I | M | H |
| N | E | U | T | C | I | A | Y | A | E | T | N | O | R | C | M | E | T | L |
| M | C | K | P | R | B | R | C | G | N | R | O | P | S | E | C | E | I | P |
| T | E | H | O | L | A | T | R | K | O | A | S | C | L | N | B | P | R | N |
| Z | S | H | E | J | I | B | N | E | I | T | I | P | G | A | M | M | O | N |
| A | T | T | A | C | K | T | S | S | T | E | C | N | L | R | Y | U | U | Y |
| S | T | I | S | A | K | N | R | I | I | G | R | A | F | I | E | E | T | N |
| P | R | U | L | E | S | E | C | O | S | Y | L | S | E | O | T | R | R | M |
| A | L | N | I | B | T | D | R | P | O | I | N | T | S | O | G | D | R | S |
| E | E | L | G | N | I | S | I | S | P | U | A | N | C | H | O | R | D | V |
| H | E | P | U | S | L | T | N | O | R | L | A | S | T | U | C | O | D | A |
| E | P | O | B | I | K | E | S | E | U | N | I | C | B | M | R | W | O | Y |
| T | C | R | I | E | D | A | T | C | L | G | B | L | O | T | D | N | L | U |
| R | A | D | I | F | N | O | L | I | C | S | E | N | D | I | N | G | I | A |
| R | P | I | H | D | E | A | I | D | U | N | A | B | I | L | R | G | T | O |
| I | M | C | E | K | C | I | P | I | T | S | A | L | E | N | U | O | S | R |
| E | D | I | V | Y | H | C | E | T | P | R | A | O | G | M | I | T | E | N |

ANCHOR
ATTACK
BLACK
BLITZ
BLOT
BOARD
BRIEFCASE
CALCULATE
CASINO
CHECKERS
COLOURS
COUNTERS
DICE
DOUBLE
DROP
ENDING
GAME
GAMMON
JOKER
NUMBERS
OPTIONS
PICK
PIECES
PLAYERS
POINTS
POSITION
PRIME
RULES
SCENARIO
SCORE
SHAKER
SINGLE
SPLIT
STRATEGY
TABLE
TACTICS
TERRITORY

ued...

# KILLER SUDOKU

Killer Sudoku is based on the traditional sudoku grid and every column, every row and every 3x3 box must contain the digits 1 to 9. But there's a twist – the dotted squares must be filled with numbers that add up to that in the left corner.



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| 7 | 9 | | 1 | 17 | | 10 | 5 | 2 |
| 9 | 17 | 3 | 7 | | 12 | | 4 | 16 |
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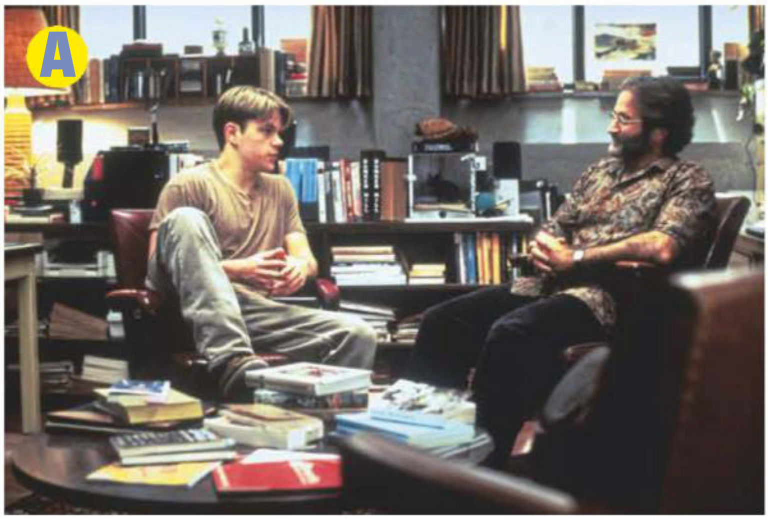
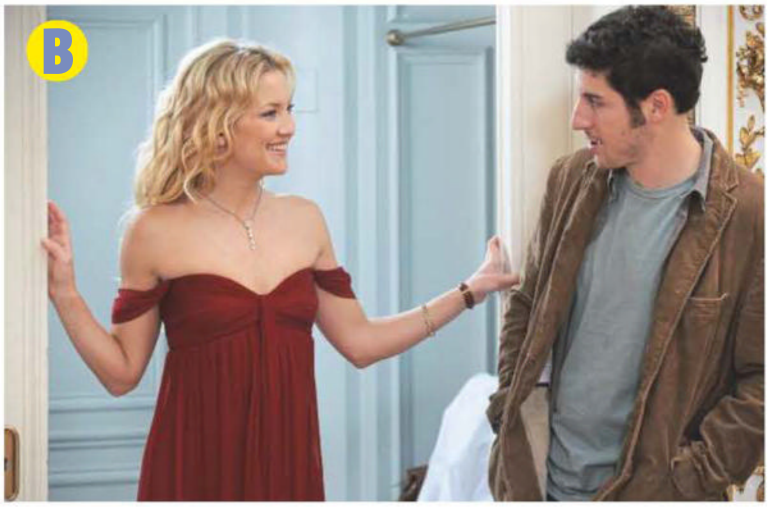
| 15 | 18 | | | | | | 6 | |
| | 16 | | | 3 | | 17 | | 8 |
| 3 | | 17 | | 7 | | 13 | | |
| 10 | 16 | | | 11 | | 5 | 16 | 9 |
| | 7 | 17 | | | | | | |
| 3 | | 9 | 9 | | 8 | 9 | | 6 |

# GUESS THE MOVIE

Can you name these famous films from looking at just one scene?

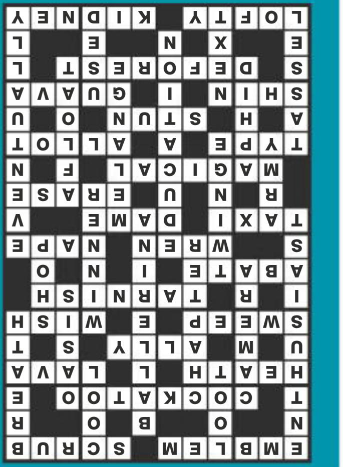




Pictures Shutterstock

# THIS WEEK'S SOLUTIONS

## BITS & PIECES



## GUESS THE CELEB

A Lana Condor
B Theo James

## WHAT ON EARTH?

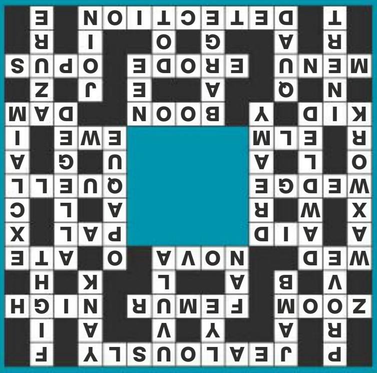
One pound coin

## ROUND SUM

33

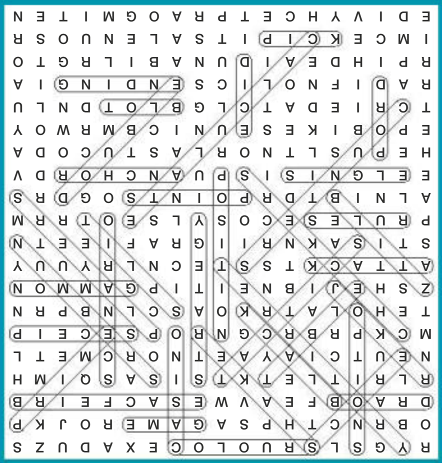
## CELEBRITY CODEBREAKER

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| R | J | P | H | N | U | K | Y | L | E | S | Z | D |
| **14** | **15** | **16** | **17** | **18** | **19** | **20** | **21** | **22** | **23** | **24** | **25** | **26** |
| B | Q | V | A | W | G | X | M | F | O | T | I | C |



**Mystery celebrity** Selena Gomez

## WORDSEARCH



## KILLER SUDOKU

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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| 9 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 5 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| 6 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 9 | 8 | 3 |
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| 8 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 7 | 1 |
| 3 | 1 | 9 | 2 | 7 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 6 |

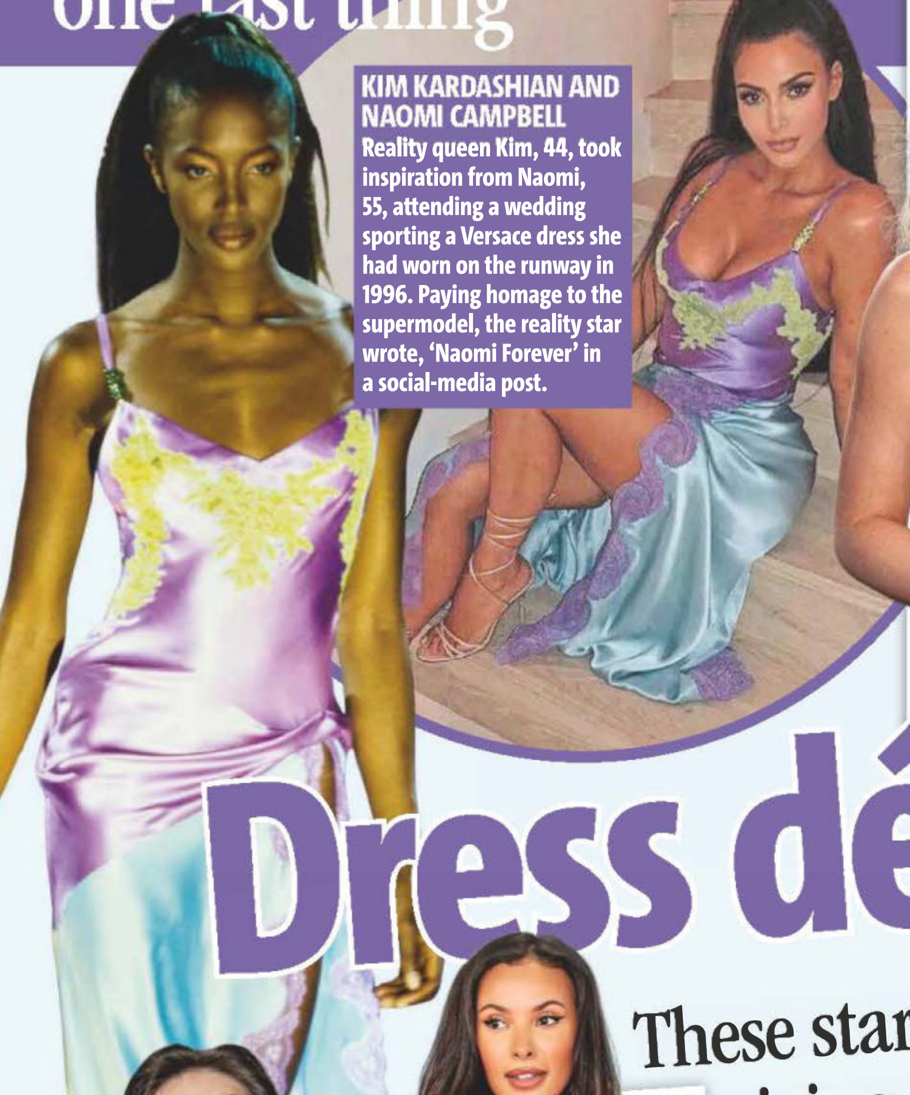
## GUESS THE MOVIE

A Good Will Hunting
B My Best Friend's Girl

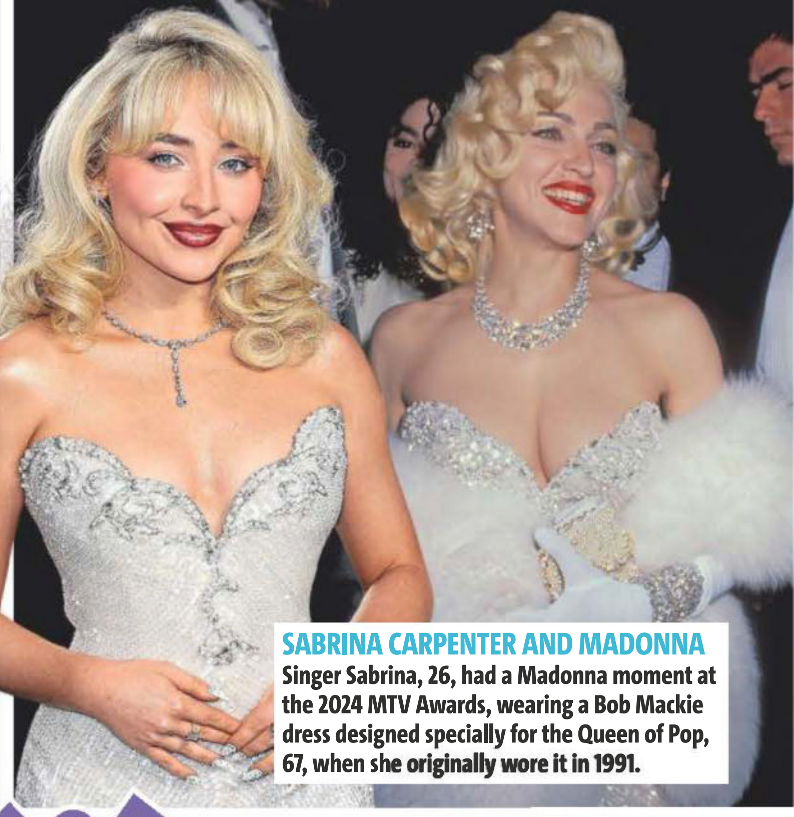
*NB for Prize Puzzles information, see page 53

# Dress déjà vu

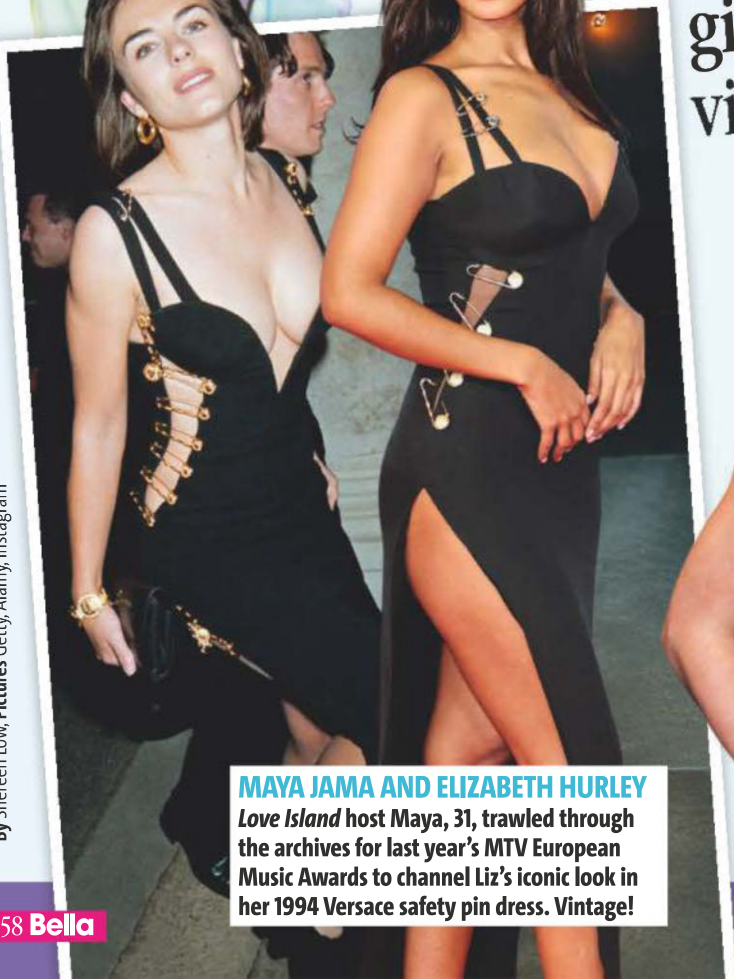
These stars' outfits are giving throwback vibes



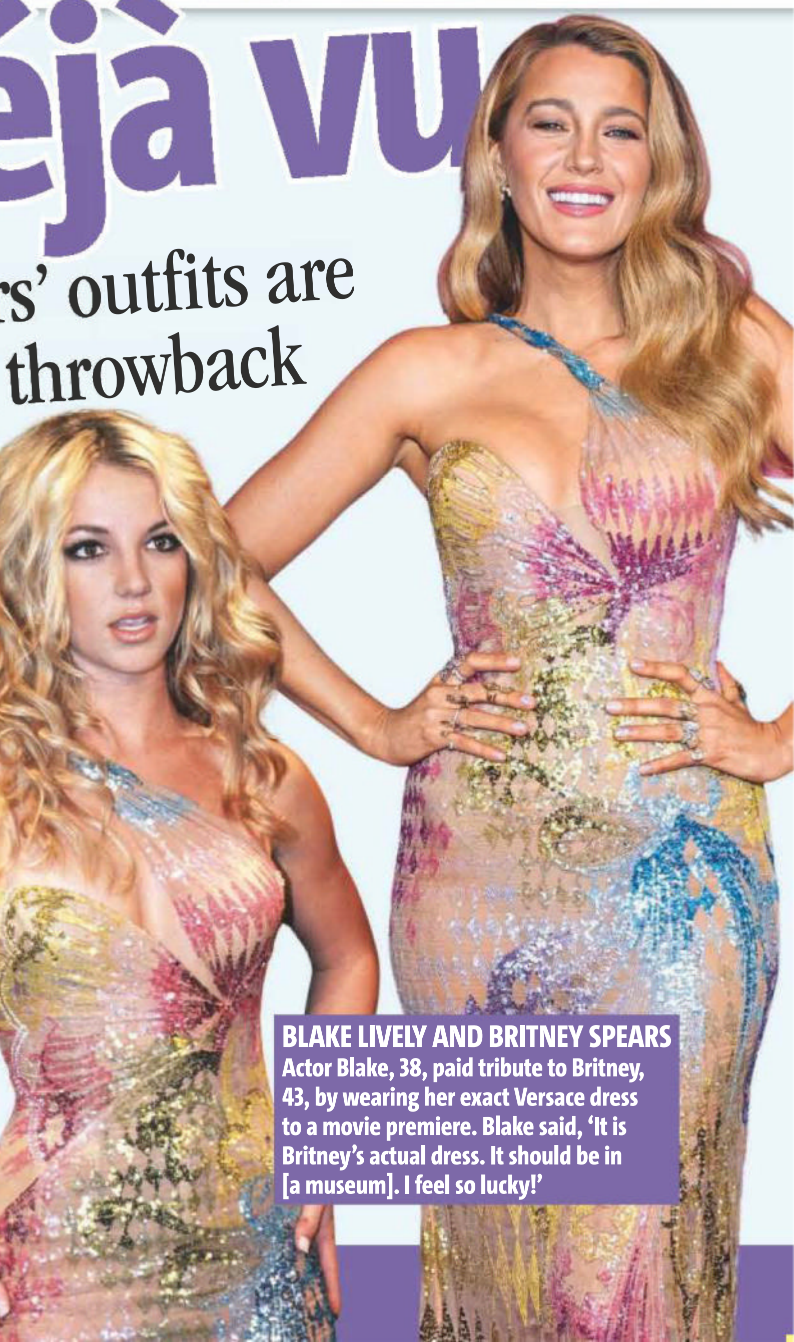
**KIM KARDASHIAN AND NAOMI CAMPBELL**
Reality queen Kim, 44, took inspiration from Naomi, 55, attending a wedding sporting a Versace dress she had worn on the runway in 1996. Paying homage to the supermodel, the reality star wrote, 'Naomi Forever' in a social-media post.



**SABRINA CARPENTER AND MADONNA**
Singer Sabrina, 26, had a Madonna moment at the 2024 MTV Awards, wearing a Bob Mackie dress designed specially for the Queen of Pop, 67, when she originally wore it in 1991.

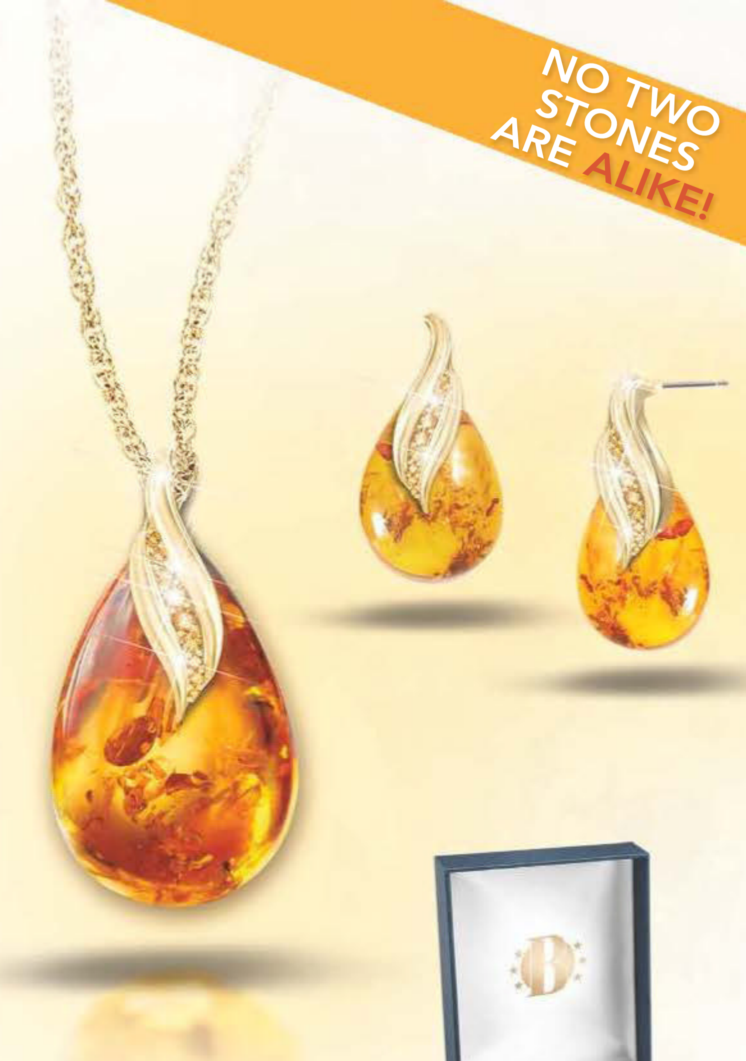


**MAYA JAMA AND ELIZABETH HURLEY**
*Love Island* host Maya, 31, trawled through the archives for last year's MTV European Music Awards to channel Liz's iconic look in her 1994 Versace safety pin dress. Vintage!



**BLAKE LIVELY AND BRITNEY SPEARS**
Actor Blake, 38, paid tribute to Britney, 43, by wearing her exact Versace dress to a movie premiere. Blake said, 'It is Britney's actual dress. It should be in [a museum]. I feel so lucky!'

By Shereen Low, **Pictures** Getty, Alamy, Instagram



NO TWO STONES ARE ALIKE!

OVER 4 CARATS
TOTAL OF
GENUINE
AMBER

16 Genuine Citrine Accents

18 Carat Gold-plated
Solid Sterling Silver

# *Amber* DROPS OF HONEY

## GENUINE GEMSTONE PENDANT & EARRINGS SET

Pendant measures 0.66 inch (1.7 cm) in height. Chain measures 18 inches (45.7 cm) in length. Earrings each measure 0.5 inch (1.3 cm) in height

## A MILLION-YEAR-OLD NATURAL BEAUTY

Gaze into a piece of Amber, and you'll soon find yourself lost in the enchanting warmth of its rich, golden glow that reminds you of irresistibly sweet honey. Formed over millions of years from fossilized tree resin, Amber was once cherished as a treasure far more valuable than gold itself. Each piece of Amber is unique, glimmering with confetti-like inclusions—no two are alike!

This stunning set showcases over 4 carats of genuine Amber. Each Amber 'drop' is held by an elegant wave design accented with genuine Citrine gemstones, 16 in total. Also known as the "Sun Stone," named for its bright, yellow tones, Citrine is the perfect complement to the deep golden hues of Amber. Beautiful and affordable, Amber is a genuine gemstone that offers BOTH unique style and incredible value! The pendant comes with a matching 18" chain, and the earrings feature hypo-allergenic posts for pierced ears only. The jewellery set is handcrafted of 18 carat gold-plated solid sterling silver.

### *Amazingly Affordable Luxury Available Only from The Bradford Exchange*

A harmonious blend of natural elegance and vibrant energy, this pendant and earrings set is a remarkable value at only £149.96, payable in 4 interest-free installments of £37.49 (plus £6.99 S&S)* It arrives in a custom presentation case along with a Certificate of Authenticity. To order yours, backed by our unconditional, 120-day, full-money-back guarantee**, you need pay nothing now, simply complete and return your Priority Order Form today!

**Due to hygiene implications, the earrings must be returned in the original packaging and should not have been worn. © The Bradford Exchange. * S&S - Shipping & Service. Offer applies to UK only. Our guarantee is in addition to the rights provided to you by consumer protection regulations. 01-37965-001

## FASTEST WAY TO ORDER

**www.bradford.co.uk/amberset**

***Or call on* 0333 003 0019**

***Lines are open: Mon-Thurs 10-6 Fri 9-5 Sat 9-4***

***and quote reference code 469878***

## PAY NOTHING NOW

### PRIORITY ORDER FORM

**Please Respond Promptly**

**To: The Bradford Exchange, PO Box 653, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 4RA**

**YES!** Please order __ (Qty) of the **Amber 'Drops of Honey' Genune Gemstone Pendant & Earrings Set** for me as described in this advertisement.

**Complete today or Call 0333 003 0019**

Title............... Name..................................................................
(PLEASE PRINT)

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